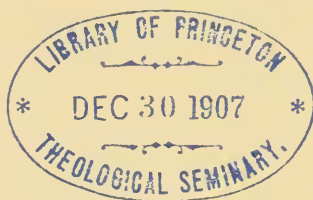


The Message
of the
Twelve Prophets

W. D. Murray



Division BS1560

Section M984

THE MESSAGE OF THE
TWELVE PROPHETS

THE MESSAGE OF THE TWELVE PROPHETS

BY

WILLIAM D. MURRAY

And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place.—2 PETER 1:19.

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Introduction

Several reasons have influenced the author in preparing this book. The first is that those who have spent their lives studying the prophetic books of the Bible, as well as those who have studied these books even in a cursory fashion, are agreed that "they form the key to all the chief problems of Old Testament study, and without them no one can hope to make any real progress in the knowledge of the Old Testament as a whole."

Another reason is well expressed by Cornill in his *Prophets of Israel*: "The whole history of humanity has produced nothing which can be compared in the remotest degree with the prophecy of Israel. Through prophecy Israel became the prophet of mankind. Let this never be overlooked or forgotten—the costliest and noblest treasure that man possesses he owes to Israel and to Israelitic prophecy."

These studies are an attempt to make the Minor Prophets a subject for devotional study. They have therefore been arranged in brief daily portions and are printed so that questions can be answered in writing. It is of the first importance that this should be done.

The text used in preparing this volume is that of the American Standard Edition of the Revised Version which should be used by students. The questions, oftentimes, will be unintelligible in connection with other texts of the Bible.

The studies are arranged so that each of the prophets forms a book study by itself, covering one or more complete weeks. Students are urged, while studying a particular book, to read it through occasionally. In no other way can the message in its entirety be grasped. For this purpose the volumes on the Minor Prophets in the Modern Reader's Bible and in the Temple Bible are recommended. The former is, perhaps, the best book for the purpose, as it uses the Revised Version and shows the

literary characteristics of the book; the latter is in the authorized text and has brief, helpful introductions. In this connection the chart at the end of the book ought to be carefully filled in as the studies proceed.

A chronological chart is printed giving the place of the prophets in the history of the Hebrew people, together with the names and dates of a few of the more important kings. In many cases the date of the prophet can be fixed only approximately, but some order had to be adopted, and the one here followed is that which commends itself to the author. The map of the country is of great importance and should be frequently consulted.

From time to time, throughout the studies, references to other books of the Old Testament and to various historical events will be found, which it is thought will give a fairly complete, though brief, outline of the history of the Old Testament, at least an outline upon which future studies may be based.

Many books might be recommended, besides those above mentioned, but only two or three need be referred to here. George Adam Smith's *Book of the Twelve Prophets* in the Expositors' Bible Series is almost indispensable, if one wishes to hear the message for to-day which these old prophets spoke. Sander's and Kent's *Messages of the Prophets*, a paraphrase of the text, throws a flood of light upon the meaning of the books. Farrar's *Minor Prophets* in Men of the Bible Series and *The Minor Prophets* by Rev. John Adams, in Bible Class Primers, are small but helpful books. The thanks of the author are heartily given to all those from whose works he has quoted.

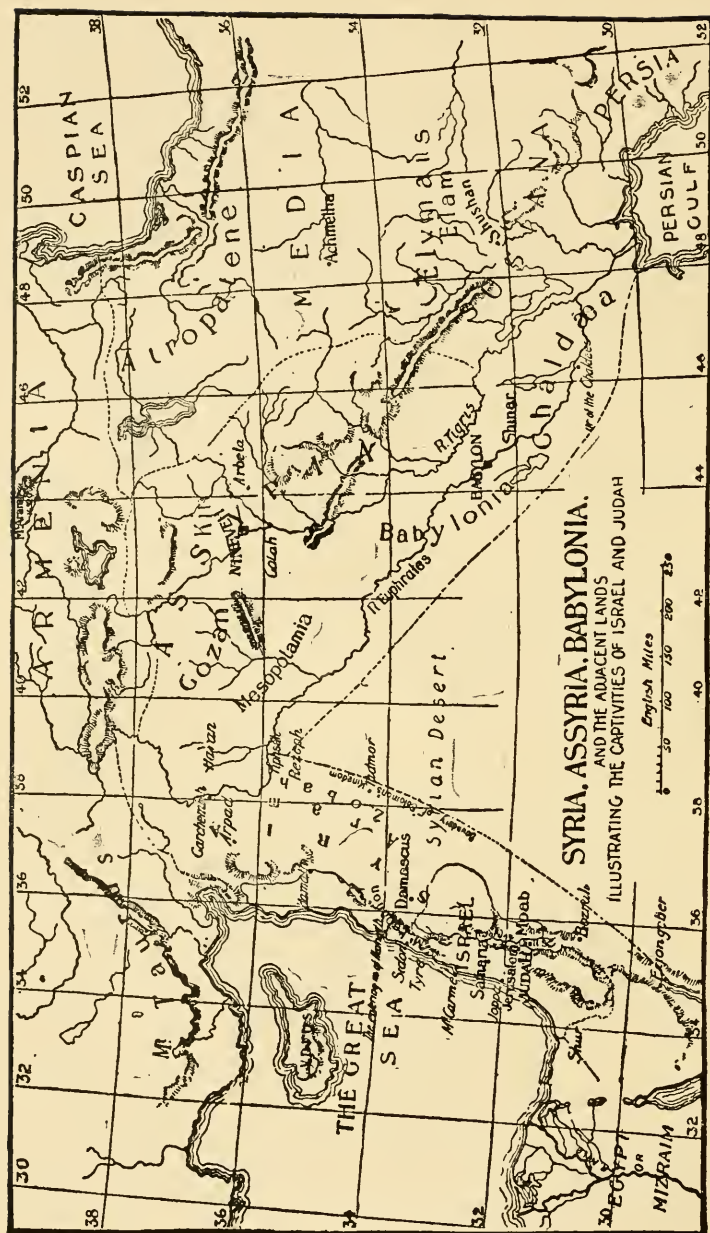
The words of a recent writer might well be repeated here: "It is hardly necessary," he says, "to bespeak attention for the Scriptures included in this volume. They are 'minor' only in length; for the rest, it is doubtful if any collection of miscellaneous literature has ever brought together so many writers of such surpassing interest. They stretch over a period of time which, on one theory of dates, is as great as that which in English literature separates Wycliffe from Browning. Of the individual prophets, Amos was a herdsman and dresser of sycamore trees; Daniel a mage, and one of a triumvirate administering a world empire; Jonah was a missionary; Micah a plain countryman; Zephaniah of royal descent; the rest have

died away from human record leaving only their works to speak for them." And another has said: "The period between Amos and the return is the golden age of Old Testament literature."

These studies were prepared originally for use in the author's Bible class of business men, and have been taught by him at various times. Out of each class which has studied them, one or more of the members has gone into Christian work; they have heard the call of God through the prophets of old. It is the earnest desire of the author that through this book the same call shall come to many more men, and that yet others, in larger numbers, shall listen to the message to live a fuller and a richer Christian life.

WILLIAM D. MURRAY.

PLAINFIELD, N. J.



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The Message of the Twelve Prophets 1

FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

FIRST DAY: AMOS 1:1, 2. TITLE AND TEXT.

PART I. Note the title of the book in v. 1.

The author: Amos. Where did he live? Where was it? 1 Chron. 11:6.

What was his occupation? 1:1, 7:14, 15.

What does he say he is not?

Notice how his outdoor life is reflected in his writings by the illustrations he uses. 3:12; 9:13; 7:1; 2:13; 6:12; 5:8.

From which nation did Amos come?

Where was he speaking when he first delivered his message? 7:13.

This may have been the region where John the Baptist preached, Luke 1:80, and where Christ was with the wild beasts, Mark 1:13.

Recalling that before this time (937 B.C.) the Hebrew people had been divided into two nations, Judah and Israel—one in the south, the other in the north—to which of these was Amos speaking? Cf. 3:1; 5:1 *et al.*

What is the date of the book? v. 1. Forty years after Elisha. On the earthquake, see Zech. 14:5.

Notice that he was the first of the prophets to write his prophecy. He came before Isaiah and Jeremiah.

PART II. Verse 2 is the prophet's text. What does he mean by "Jehovah will roar from Zion"? Consult the marginal references.

What indication is there in v. 2 of the far-reaching effect of Jehovah's voice?

2 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

SECOND DAY: AMOS 1:6-10. DESTRUCTION OF FOREIGN ENEMIES.

PART III. *The Introduction* begins at v. 3 and extends to 2:16.

Amos of Judah has come from his southern home to speak to the people of the northern kingdom; this farmer—how should he attract attention? His method is disclosed in 1:3-2:8.

He first announces that God is going to punish three foreign nations. Name them. Locate them on the map. Notice that they were far away from Israel and that they were Israel's enemies.

Do you think this would tend to induce his hearers to listen to what this man had to say?

Notice the arrangement of each paragraph beginning "Thus saith Jehovah" and ending "I will send a fire." This arrangement is clearly brought out in the printing in the Modern Reader's Bible.

As you study the book be on the lookout for the key word and key text asked for in this study for the seventh day of the fifth week.

PRAYER: "Almighty God, graciously protect and conduct us through the uncertainties of this new year of our earthly pilgrimage; prepare us for its duties and trials, its joys and sorrows; help us to watch and pray, and to be ready like men that wait for their Lord; and grant that every change, whether it be of prosperity or adversity, of life or death, may bring us nearer to Thee, and to that great eternal year of joy and rest which, after years of this vain earthly life, awaits the faithful in Thy blissful presence. Amen."

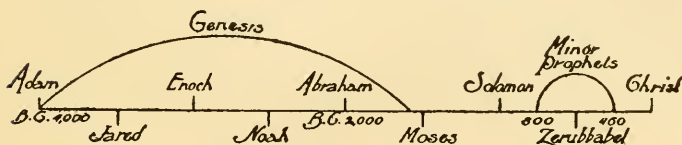
FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

THIRD DAY: AMOS 1:11-2:3. DESTRUCTION OF ENEMIES WHO ARE RELATED TO THEM.

Amos comes nearer to them now and foretells the punishment of three nations that were related to Israel—Edom, Ammon, and Moab. How were they related to Israel? How were they situated geographically with reference to Israel?

Notice more at length the arrangement of each paragraph: the number of transgressions and the description of their sin. What was the sin in each case?

Familiarize yourself with this simple chronological chart which Dr. Schauffler suggests: (The dates are only approximate).



MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "Thus saith Jehovah," vs. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1. God is still speaking to men, not only through these old, yet ever new, words of His prophet, but in the experiences of life; sin is still sin, and God still punishes it. It is for us to listen for His voice, and, hearing it, to obey it.

4 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

FOURTH DAY: AMOS 2:4, 5. JUDAH TO BE DESTROYED.

About which nation does he prophesy here?

Judah was half as large again as Rhode Island.
What was their sin?

How would this word from Amos make his hearers feel toward him?

The Minor Prophets: These books are called by this name, not because they are of less importance than other books of the Bible. "It was the Latins who designated them 'The Minor Prophets,' on account of their brevity as compared with those who are the major, because of their ample volume." "The name Minor Prophets has proved to be very misleading. Thomas Paine is by no means the only person who has supposed that they were so called because of their inferior importance. They owe their name solely to their smaller size, and the book which contained them was known in Greek as *τα δωδεκαπροφητον*, or twelve-prophet book."

Meaning of word prophet. 1. Ex. 7:1, 2; 2. Dan. 4:24; 3. Acts 13:1; Luke 7:28. Study these passages and notice the three different senses in which the word is used.

Amos says he was not a prophet. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, so the Holy Spirit saw in this simple herdsman an instrument fitted for His work." May not this be true of you? Read the following passages and see what some of the men were whom God used: Judges 6:11; 1 Sam. 16:11; 1 Kings 19:19; 1 Sam. 9:3, 20; Ex. 3:1.

Prophets have been called "The greatest gift of God to the ancient world."

FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

FIFTH DAY: AMOS 2:6-8. ISRAEL TO SUFFER.

"Now he has got them just where he wants them. He says, 'You think it is a good thing to destroy Damascus, Tyre, and even Judah. Listen. I have still another word.' Then he goes on to tell of the destruction of their own land.

What was their sin?

Cf. Ex. 22:26 on 2:8, showing how the marginal references help explain the text.

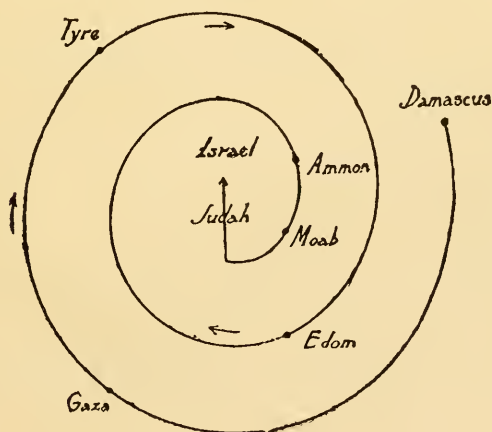
Read the following passages and state the moral condition of Israel at this time. 5:11-12; 8:5-7; 3:15; 4:1.

It was also a time of great political prosperity.

What indications are there of wealth and luxury?

Read the passages in the history telling about the times in which Amos lived. Uzziah, King of Judah, 2 Kings 15:1 *et seq.*, Jeroboam II King of Israel, 2 Kings 14:23 *et seq.*

Prof. W. W. White suggests the following chart. It shows how Amos gradually approached his announcement to Israel.



6 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

SIXTH DAY: AMOS 2:9-16. GOD'S GOODNESS AND THEIR
PUNISHMENT.

Read vs. 9-11 and state what God had done for Israel.

What was a Nazarite? Cf. Numb. 6:2, 3.

What was to be their punishment? Vs. 13-16.

Read 1:3-2:16 and make a list of eight national sins hated by God.

The Minor Prophets are more frequently quoted in the New Testament than the Major Prophets. The text of the first Christian sermon is taken from Joel (Acts 2:17-21); Stephen gives emphasis to his argument by a quotation from Amos (Acts 7:42, 43); St. James by a quotation from the same prophet decides the question discussed at the first Christian council (Acts 15:16, 17); Joel teaches the momentous fact of the resurrection and a general judgment (Joel 3:13-16); Micah reveals to men the birthplace of our Lord (Matt. 2:6); Zechariah foreshadows His crucifixion (John 19:37); Jonah His resurrection (Matt. 12:39, 41). See also Matt. 2:15; 9:13; 11:10; 12:7; Rom. 1:17; 9:13; 9:25; 9:26; 10:13.

FIRST WEEK. DESTRUCTION COMING.

SEVENTH DAY: AMOS CHS. I AND 2. "THE HEATHEN'S
CRIMES AND ISRAEL'S."

To fix in mind the divisions so far made of the book,
read 1:1-2:16 and fill out the following in your own
words:

I. Title 1:1.

II. Text 1:2.

III. Introduction 1:3-2:16.

Destruction coming upon foreign enemies:

1.

2.

3.

Destruction coming upon related enemies:

1.

2.

3.

Destruction coming upon his own nation Judah.

Destruction coming upon Israel.

Their sin and punishment.

Memorize 2 Pet. 1:19.

8 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

FIRST DAY: AMOS 3:1-8. THIS IS NO ACCIDENT.

Part IV of the book begins here and includes chs. 3 and 4. It might be called *The First Sermon*.
Against whom does he speak?

What is his subject? V. 2.

Where was he speaking? See 7:12, 13.

Read vs. 3-8 and state how these words show that God's purpose to punish Israel is not accidental.

What do vs. 7 and 8 tell us about prophecy? Cf. calls of Moses, Ex. 3:1-4; Isa. 6:6; Jer. 1:4-10.

Write out a summary of vs. 2-8.

We should remember that these Old Testament prophecies were originally sermons or addresses delivered orally by a man to the people for whom they were primarily intended. Afterward they were written down and preserved for us.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: Only those who hear God can speak for God, v. 7. The message must be received before it can be delivered. Am I living, day by day, such a life that in it I may expect God to speak to me?

"*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*" v. 3. Companionship with God depends on going the way God goes and on agreement with God. If we do His will we shall have sweet fellowship with Him.

Memorize John 7:17.

SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

SECOND DAY: AMOS 3:9-15. CIVIL OPPRESSION.

Where was Ashdod? Egypt?

Why were they called?

What accusation does he make against Israel here?

What does he mean by Samaria? Vs. 9 and 12.

Write out in your own words vs. 9-15.

Of what crimes are they accused here?

Winter house, summer house, v. 15. This does not indicate two houses, but different parts of the same house. Thompson says: "It is rare to meet a family that has an entirely separate dwelling for summer." Cf. Judges 3:20; Jer. 36:22.

What is the meaning of prophecy?

Three Hebrew words are used: *Nabi*=to bubble up; *Roeh*=one who sees in a trance; *Chozeh*=seer. All three words are used in 1 Chron. 29:29.

Prophet means "one who interprets for another." See 1 Kings 18:22. Foretelling was not their most important work. Neither Samuel nor John foretold the future. In their calls nothing was said about foretelling. See Isa. 6.

"In general, it is of the deepest importance, for any genuine comprehension of the prophets in their real grandeur, to see that they were preachers of righteousness, statesmen and patriots, enlightened to teach an ever-apostatizing nation—

‘What makes a kingdom great and keeps it so,

What ruins kingdoms and lays cities flat.’

They were messengers from Jehovah, Hag. 1:13, men of God."

10 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

THIRD DAY: AMOS 4:1-5. ISRAEL'S GUILT.

Kine of Bashan==the women of the nation.

With hooks, v. 2. The Assyrians led their captives away by hooks or rings in the upper lip.

What was their sin? Vs. 1-3.

What is the figure in vs. 2, 3?

Where and what was Gilgal? Bethel?

What sin is described in vs. 4, 5?

That which is leavened, v. 5. See marginal reference for explanation.

This passage is an example of the use of irony.

What was the condition of Israel in Amos' time? 3:10; 2:6-8; 8:4-6; 5:11, 12; 4:1; 2:7; 8:4; 6:6.

SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

FOURTH DAY: AMOS 4:6-11; GEN. 19:17-25. UN-
HEEDED PUNISHMENT.

Different punishments are described here; what is meant by each?

Cleanness of teeth, v. 6.

Withholden the rain, v. 7.

Smitten with blasting, vs. 9, 10, 11.

What does the refrain, in vs. 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11, "*Yet have ye not returned unto me,*" show us of God's purpose in sending these punishments? Cf. Heb. 12:6.

"Amos is especially the poor man's prophet, for he was a poor man himself; not a courtier like Isaiah, or a priest like Jeremiah, or a sage like Daniel; but a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit in Tekoa, near Bethlehem, where Amos was born. What was the secret of this herdsman's strength? He believed and preached the kingdom of God and His righteousness: the simple but infinite difference between right and wrong, and the certain doom of wrong, if wrong was persisted in."

12 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

FIFTH DAY: AMOS 4:12, 13. THE PUNISHMENT.

To what does the word "therefore" refer in v. 12?

What was it God was going to do to them?

What kind of a God is described in v. 13?

"Uttered though it was some seven-and-twenty centuries ago, the Book of Amos appeals in a very striking way to present-day society. History repeats itself: the evils against which the prophet inveighed might be seen in their full in the later days of the Roman Empire, in the France of Louis XIV., but never in more startling guise than in the Christendom of the present day—extremes of wealth and poverty grievously accentuated, the pursuit of pleasure and luxury treated as the supreme end of life by many, embittered struggles between capital and labor, and with it all a fading of the recognition of One above all who sees and judges—such evils, reproducing those of an earlier day, should warn the nations that obstinate refusal to attend to God's message must be again to invoke the same doom."

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Prepare to meet thy God,*" v. 12. Our whole life on earth is a preparatory school. Some day we shall meet the King of kings; what kind of preparation ought ours to be as we look forward to that day? Our future destiny depends on our present preparations. We must be sons *now* to be heirs *hereafter*. "If children, then heirs." Rom. 8:17.

SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

SIXTH DAY: AMOS, CHS. 3 AND 4.

Read chs. 3 and 4 and fill out the following outline:

IV. First Sermon.

Subject:

3:3-8.

9-15.

4:1-5.

a 1-3.

b 4, 5.

6-11.

a 6.

b 7, 8.

c 9.

d 10.

e 11.

12, 13.

What would you say was the subject of this sermon?

Write out in fifty words the substance of this first sermon.

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SECOND WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

SEVENTH DAY: AMOS, CHS. 3 AND 4.

What would you say if you had to write an address on the words of v. 2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, *therefore* I will visit upon you all your iniquities."

Does the fact that when God speaks His prophets had to speak (3:8) have any application to your life as a Christian? Has He spoken to you? Have you spoken? "Let him that heareth say, come." Is there anything in your life that corresponds with the false zeal of 4:4, 5?

Notice the source of the prophet's information as stated in 1:3, 6, 9, 11; 2:2, 4, 6; 3:1; 5:4.

Where does your message come from?

PRAYER: "O God, who hast made our days as an handbreadth, so that our age is as nothing before Thee; impress us with a sense of our frailty, and so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Dispose us to walk circumspectly, redeeming the time; to be sober, watchful, and prayerful; and to do with all our might whatsoever our hand findeth, for the advancement of Thy glory, the good of our fellow-men, and the furtherance of our own spiritual welfare. Amen."

THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

FIRST DAY: AMOS 5:1-3. STATEMENT.

Part V of the book is *The Second Sermon: A Lamentation*, chs. 5 and 6.

Against whom does he speak?

Who is meant by the Virgin of Israel? V. 2.

What is the meaning of v. 3?

Note that vs. 1-3 form a little lyric poem.

How the prophets received their message:

1. Visions, Ezek. 1:4; Obad. 1; Hos. 12:10.
2. Dreams, Judges 7:13; 1 Sam. 28:15.
3. The spoken word, 1 Sam. 3:11; 1 Kings 19:9.
4. Divine impulse, Joel 1:1; Ezek. 18:1; 1 Sam. 10:5, 6.
"They were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Although Amos was the first to write his prophecy, there had been prophets before him. Deborah is called a prophetess (Judges 4:4). Moses, Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Abijah, and others are called prophets (Deut. 34:10; 1 Sam. 22:5; 1 Kings 1:8; Acts 13:20). Find other references. The two best known are Elijah and his successor Elisha, prophets of Israel, who lived about 875-800 B.C., and who may be remembered as the first of a great line. Elijah has been called "one of the most Titanic personages in all the Old Testament."

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THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

SECOND DAY: AMOS 5:4-9. SEEK GOD.

What were Bethel, Gilgal, and Beer-sheba?

What did their seeking of these places indicate?

What was their sin? V. 7.

Who were they to seek? Vs. 5, 6, 8.

What was the house of Joseph? V. 6.

What character of God is indicated by vs. 8 and 9?

Memorize v. 4.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Seek not Bethel . . . Seek the Lord.*" Some people seem to think that by going to the regular place of worship they are fulfilling all of God's requirements. It is not so. He wants us to seek Him—no mere form can take the place of such seeking, even when that form takes us to church. Our religion is a religion of the person. The New Testament equivalent of these words is the saying of Jesus, "Follow me."

Read Ps. 121.

THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

THIRD DAY: AMOS 5:10-15. THEIR SINS AND PROMISE
OF HELP.

What was "the gate"? Vs. 10, 15.

What sins are enumerated here? Cf. Hag. 1:6.

Can you name any similar sins to-day?

What class is addressed here?

The houses seem to have been usually of dried brick.
To build of hewn stone would indicate wealth.

Why is God called the Lord of Hosts? Of what hosts
is He Lord?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: The way to live is by seeking
good, v. 14. But men seem to think that they live by seek-
ing evil. It is the old story of the prodigal son: we must
needs journey into a far country and waste our substance
in riotous living.

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THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

FOURTH DAY: AMOS 5:16-27. SORROW COMING.

What was to be the result?

To whom does he refer in v. 18?

Write out v. 19 in your own words.

What is the meaning of Day of Jehovah? V. 20.

V. 21. "Privilege and means of grace won't save,
beware of wickedness and worship."

Describe the three different kinds of offerings referred
to in v. 22.

What does he mean by v. 25?

THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

FIFTH DAY: AMOS 6:1-6. HEARTLESS SELF-INDULGENCE.

To what class of the people does the prophet speak here?
Vss. 1, 6.

Where was Calneh, Hamath, and Gath?

What was their sin?

More men are spoiled by prosperity than by adversity.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Woe to them that are at ease in Zion.*" There's a danger in feeling satisfied in Zion to-day. God demands of us a holy dissatisfaction. He has saved us and for that we rejoice; but until sin and sorrow and shame are put away we cannot be "at ease in Zion."

"Far-called our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget."

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THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

SIXTH DAY: AMOS 6:7-11. THEIR PUNISHMENT.

What was their punishment to be?

What is the meaning of the 10th verse?

Why "uncle"? V. 10. See margin.

What custom is referred to in "Burneth him"? V. 10.
Cf. 1 Sam. 31:12.

Why would it be dangerous to "make mention of the name of Jehovah"? V. 10.

PRAYER: "Lord God Almighty, we stand in awe of Thy majesty; we are as nothing in our own eyes; we know that we cannot plead our own merit. But we come asking forgiveness of our sins through the merits of Thy dear Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Because of His great sacrifice of Himself for our sins may we escape the punishments we have so richly merited, and the glory shall be His and His alone. Amen."

THIRD WEEK. A LAMENTATION.

SEVENTH DAY: AMOS 6:12-14. THE CONQUEST IS SURE.

Verse 12 has been paraphrased: "A moral order exists which it is as impossible to break without disaster as it would be to break the natural order by driving horses upon a precipice. There is an inherent necessity in the sinner's doom."

What punishment is foretold here?

Compare v. 14 with 2 Kings 14:25 and with the map and see how extensive Jeroboam's kingdom was.

Fill out the following outline:

V. Second Sermon.

Subject:

5:1-3.

4-9.

10-13.

14-15.

16-17.

18-20.

21-24.

25-27.

6:1-6.

7-11.

12-14.

Write out in thirty words the substance of the prophet's message in this second sermon.

FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

FIRST DAY: AMOS 7:1-3. VISION OF LOCUSTS.

Part VI. A Series of Visions. 7:1-9:10.

Note here a change of method from sermons to visions.

Locusts were like our grasshoppers.

Locusts, v. 1: "They are perhaps the most terrible of all the scourges of Bible lands. Their swarms fill the air, darkening the sky, and the noise of their wings resembles the pattering of heavy rain. They fly with great rapidity, and toward nightfall they light wherever they may happen to be; and such are their numbers that they often break the branches of the trees to which they cling." See Joel 2:4-11.

What is the meaning of the "latter growth," "king's mowings"?

Note the arrangement here and in the following vision: The vision, the prophet's plea, Jehovah repents.

What was his plea?

At the prayer of this prophet of destruction the destruction is turned aside. This would win the confidence of his hearers. Remember Amos was a stranger to them.

FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

SECOND DAY: AMOS 7:4-6. VISION OF FIRE.

What is the figure here? Cf. Isa. 66:15, 16.

What was the prophet's plea for Judah?

How would the people regard Amos after his successful intercession to Jehovah for them?

God revealed Himself to the prophets, vs. 1, 4.

How the prophets delivered their message: "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets *by divers portions and in divers manners.*" Heb. 1:1.

1. ORALLY: Amos 7:12, 13. Jer. 36:32. Elisha had music played, 2 Kings 3:15, 16.

2. IN POETRY: Hab. ch. 3. Jonah ch. 2. Amos 5:2.

3. BY SYMBOLIC ACTION: Isa. 20:2, 3. Ezek. 4:4. 1 Kings 11:30, 31.

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FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

THIRD DAY: AMOS 7:7-9. VISION OF THE PLUMB-LINE.

Explain the meaning of these verses.

“I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword,” was a prophecy that the King himself was not to be exempt from the divine anger.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: “*I will not again pass by them any more,*” v. 8. “*I will pass over you,*” Ex. 12:13. We are at liberty to take our places in either of these two classes. We may make such a choice now that God will come upon us with destruction, or we may so choose that as sinners are being destroyed we shall be saved. The blood entitled the Hebrews to protection; the blood is efficient to-day. Memorize Ex. 12:13.

FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

FOURTH DAY: AMOS 7:10-17. CONTROVERSY.

What aroused the anger of Amaziah?

"Divine truth is challenged by human law, and the word of God silenced in the name of the King."

What did Amaziah tell the King?

What did Amaziah tell Amos?

On *Bethel* v. 10, see Gen. 28:10-19.

What does he mean by "Go unto the land of Judah and there eat bread"? V. 12.

What reasons does Amaziah give for his command to Amos?

What, in substance, was Amos' answer? Vs. 14, 15. Cf. 3:8. 1 Cor. 9:16.

His reply has been called "The Charter of a Spiritual Religion."

Which was right, Amaziah or Amos? Why?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Would God that all Jehovah's people were prophets.*" Numb. 11:29. What a change there would be if everyone of us was a prophet in this sense—one who tells about God, one who speaks for God! This was what Jesus wanted His disciples to be when He said: "Ye shall be My witnesses." Acts 1:8. Compare these two verses and see how much alike they are.

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FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

FIFTH DAY: AMOS 8:13. VISION OF SUMMER FRUIT.

What is the vision here?

What condition of the people is symbolized by this vision?

See a somewhat similar vision seen by Jeremiah. Jer. 24:1-3.

This and the next vision are each followed by an address founded on the vision.

PRAYER: "O God, so fill us with Thy grace and enlist us in Thy work, so manifest the might of Thy word to us, that the ideal of Thy perfect Kingdom may shine as bright and near to us as to Thy prophet of old, and that we may become its inspired preachers and ever labor in its hope. Amen."

FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

SIXTH DAY: AMOS 8:4-14. DESTRUCTION IS COMING.

What sins are enumerated in vs. 4-6?

New moon, v. 5. This came in the first of the month and had been a holiday from the earliest times (1 Sam. 20:5, 2 Kings 4:23). A holiday was unwelcome to the greedy merchants.

What was to be their punishment? Vs. 11-13.

Sackcloth, v. 10. A rough cloth, worn sometimes under, sometimes over other clothes. A sign of mourning. Cf. Isa. 3:24; Jonah 3:8; Luke 10:13.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: They had silenced the prophets (7:12) and the time would come when there would be a spiritual famine; like men dying of hunger and thirst they would ransack the whole country to find God's words. The authorities silenced Jesus (Luke 23:9). O, that we might always be careful not to silence God's word from whatever source it comes to us! Perhaps in these studies God has been speaking His word once more to me; let me listen to it. To silence it might bring a famine into my soul.

FOURTH WEEK. VISIONS.

SEVENTH DAY: AMOS CHS. 7 AND 8.

What visions had he seen and what was the meaning of each?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Some dates to be remembered:

Division of the kingdom into Israel and Judah, 937 B.C.; 1 Kings 12.

Capture of Samaria and disappearance of Israel (Ten Tribes), 722 B.C.; 2 Kings 17:1-6.

Captivity of Judah in Babylon, 586 B.C.; 2 Kings 25:1-6.

First return from Babylonian captivity under Zerubabel, 537 B.C.; Ezra 1:1, 2.

Second return under Ezra, 440 B.C.; Ezra 7:27, 28; 8:15-36.

Read Ps. 79.

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

FIRST DAY: AMOS 9:1-6. THE BROKEN ALTAR.

What is the figure here? V. 1.

God promises them destruction. Notice how thorough it is to be, "unto Sheol," v. 2; "up into heaven," v. 2; "in the top of Carmel," v. 3; "in the bottom of the sea," v. 3; "into captivity," v. 4. Into the lowest or highest part of the spirit world, to the top of the mountain or the bottom of the sea in this world, even if they leave home and flee, everywhere, anywhere, God's will follows them.

Who is to do this? V. 5.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY:

"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall Thy hand lead me,
And Thy right hand shall hold me."

Read Ps. 139.

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

SECOND DAY: AMOS 9:7-10. THEIR PUNISHMENT.

Where are the places referred to in v. 7?

God is the God of all nations, not of Israel only. Cf. Isa. 10:5 ff.

What is the meaning of the first clause of v. 7?

Not all to be destroyed, v. 8.

Notice the striking prophecy in v. 9: "I will sift the house of Israel among the nations . . . yet shall not the least kernel fall upon the earth." Tell how this has come true in the history of the Jews: sifted among the nations, but never losing their identity.

In connection with these studies we ought to learn something about the previous history of Israel. Try to remember the following outline:

I. *The Beginning of the Chosen Nation as a Patriarchal Family* (Gen. 12-50). This was the beginning of the Tribes.

II. *The Migration of the Chosen Nation: Out of Egypt to Sinai; Forty Years in the Wilderness.* (Numbers.)

III. *The Chosen Nation in its Efforts Toward a Secular Government.* (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Sam.)

IV. *The Chosen Nation under a Secular King.* (1 and 2 Kings.)

V. *The Chosen Nation Reconstructed as a Jewish Church.* (1 and 2 Chron., Ezra and Neh.)

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

THIRD DAY: AMOS 9:11-15. PROMISE OF REDEMPTION.

This is Part VII of the book.

This kind of promise often comes at the close of one of these old prophecies, cf. Joel 3:18-21; Hos. 14:4-8.

What is the "tabernacle of David"?

What is the idea in v. 13, "The plowman shall overtake the reaper"?

What promise is given to the people of Israel in vs. 14, 15?

Compare Acts 15:14-18.

Read Ps. 19:1-6.

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

FOURTH DAY: PS. 72. THE MESSIANIC PROPHECY IN
AMOS 9:11; ACTS 15:16.

“The person of the Messiah does not appear in this prophecy, but there is the generic reference to the house of David and the people of Israel.”

What did Jesus say about these old prophets? John 5:39. Memorize this verse.

The 72d Psalm is a Messianic Psalm. Notice how it represents the Messianic King reigning and bringing the blessing foretold by Amos.

Make an outline from 7:1 to the end.

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

FIFTH DAY: THE BOOK OF AMOS.

Read the book through and see what you think of Rev. G. Campbell Morgan's name for it, *National Accountability*.

Fill out the following outline of the book :

I.

II.

III.

IV.

V.

VI.

VII.

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

SIXTH DAY: THE BOOK OF AMOS.

The Message of Amos: "His whole message consists in the common prophetic conviction that God is the sole and righteous governor of the world, judging the people righteously, and, when they rebel, dashing them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

"Amos is the prophet of the law; he sees the divine processes work themselves out irrespective of the moods and intrigues of the people, with which after all he is little familiar. So each of his paragraphs moves steadily forward to a climax, and every climax is doom—the captivity of the people to Assyria. You can divide his book by these things: it has its periods, strophies and refrains. It marches like the hosts of the Lord of Hosts."

Key thought: Judgment and restoration.

Key word: Punishment.

Key text: Rom. 6:23.

PRAYER: "Spirit of the Living God, who hast given us the Word of Truth that we may grow thereby, teach us how to use it wisely for our soul's health. We thank Thee for prophets and holy men of old who foretold the glory of Christ. Give us thine aid that we may read with reverence and love. Make Thy warnings clear and Thy truth effectual for our growth in knowledge and holiness. Amen."

FIFTH WEEK. DOOM AND REDEMPTION.

SEVENTH DAY: SOME TEACHINGS OF AMOS.

What does he teach about God as governor and ruler of the world? 4:6, 7, 13; 5:9; 9:5.

What does he say about the captivity of the people? 4:2; 5:27; 6:7; 7:17.

What does he say about sin and its punishment? 1:3, 6, 9; 2:13; 3:14; 4:12; 8:7; 9:8.

What use does he make of the Old Testament history? 2:10; 3:1; 5:25; 9:7.

Write down any texts which show that Rom. 6:23 is a good key text.

Remember as you study these lessons that the god and the land were intimately associated in the minds of the people in the time we are studying about. Each nation had its own land and its own god. See a striking illustration of this in 2 Kings 17:24-41, when the new settlers brought their own gods with them, and when they failed in this new land they sent for a priest to instruct them in the religion of the god of the land. So it comes out again and again that the Jehovah is the God of the land; He sends the rain or withholds it; He multiplies the flocks. See Amos 9:13, 14; Joel 3:18. This is one reason why exile from the land was such a heavy penalty—it was separation from their God. Ps. 137:4.

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SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

FIRST DAY: HOSEA 1:1. TITLE.

The Book of Hosea is divided into two principal parts:

I. Introduction. His family life. Chs. 1-3.

II. The prophecy founded on his life's experience.
Chs. 4-14.

In v. 1 we have the title of the book.

Against which kingdom does he prophesy? 1:3, 5;
4:15.

What does his name mean?

Of which kingdom was he a native?

Someone has said that of all the prophets he was the most spiritual. Keep this thought in mind as you study this book.

George Adam Smith calls him the "First prophet of grace, Israel's earliest evangelist." "This Arthur of Israel."

He dates his book by four kings of Judah and one king of Israel. Read 2 Kings 14:21 *et seq.*, for the historical setting of the book. What was the date?

"The period covered by the prophesying of Hosea was undoubtedly the darkest in the whole history of the kingdom of Israel." Cf. 4:1, 2.

SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

SECOND DAY: HOSEA 1:2-11. HIS FAMILY LIFE

What did this command mean? V. 2.

At the first, v. 2. He is looking back as he writes. Notice what a strong figure is used to denote turning away from God. Can it be that God looks upon disloyalty to Him as we look upon the disloyal wife!

Some suppose that the name Loruhamah means "that never knew a father's love," *i.e.*, born through her mother's adultery.

This is Hosea's personal life, given to him as a symbol. God spoke to Hosea through his home life. Maybe He is speaking to you in some such unexpected way.

What do the names given to the children mean? Cf. 1:7 with Zech. 4:6.

Sanders and Kent call them "Living Sermons"; in what way is this true?

Notice the seven "shalls" of vs. 10, 11. God's assertion of what He will do.

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SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

THIRD DAY: HOSEA 2:1-7. CONDUCT OF THE FAITHLESS
WIFE.

“The awful anger of wounded love.” Vs. 3, 4.

The guilty wife is described as no wife.

Taking the passage as symbolical of God's dealing with Israel, who represents God, who represents Israel?

How had Israel been to Jehovah as Gomer to Hosea?

V. 5, gives us an illustration of what Baal worship was. It was this worship to which the people turned that was in part the occasion for the rise of the prophets. “It was a religion in every way adapted to an agricultural or pastoral life; but from the prominence it gave to the male and female elements in its conception of deity, it easily led the way to the grossest type of sexual impurity.”

“Had he loved this woman, cherished and honored her, borne with and forgiven her, only to find at last his love spurned and hers turned to sinful use; so also had the love of God been treated by His chosen people, and they had fallen to the loose worship of idols.”

SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

FOURTH DAY: HOSEA 2:8-13. THE HUSBAND'S
COMPULSION.

Baalim, v. 13, plural of Baal, a deity of the Canaanites. Various places had Baalim, who were supposed to fertilize the soil. "The male god of any community was its Baal (lord or owner); the corresponding female divinity was Ashtaroth. The one was often identified with the sun, the other with the moon."

Decked herself with her nose ring, v. 13. Cf. Gen. 24:47.

What reason does Hosea give here for her behavior?

What does he say he will do?

Over what does Hosea say Jehovah is God in vs. 8, 9, 12?

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SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

FIFTH DAY: HOSEA 2:14-23. BRIGHTER DAYS ARE
COMING.

What is the meaning of v. 14?

Note the marginal reading, "Speak to her heart"; a heart-to-heart talk.

"A door of Hope," v. 15. This has been used as the name of a rescue mission for fallen women.

What will be the result to her? V. 15.

On v. 16, see John 15:15.

Note the change in the names. V. 23.

A new covenant, v. 19. What was it?

Read Ps. 32.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "I will bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her," v. 14. God's presence in loneliness. Cf. Matt. 14:23. We need to get alone with God if we would hear His voice. He wants us sometimes to go into the secret place where we can be alone with Him. There is one thing that will prevent this blessed communion—*sin*; He is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity. Cf. Hab. 1:13.

SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

SIXTH DAY: HOSEA 3:1-5. HIS LATER FAMILY LIFE.

Hosea is commanded to go after his wife Gomer, v. 1.

He brings her back, when her new lover, tired of her, sells her as a slave, v. 2.

It may be that he bought her at a sacrifice, for he gave not only money, but some goods, v. 2.

She should be with him, but not his wife, v. 3.

How does he apply this to Israel, vs. 4, 5?

Someone has said that Hosea's theology is a theology of the heart more than the head. Cf. 3:1; 11:4, 8.

Pillar, v. 4. A sacred monument showing the presence of Jehovah.

Ephod, v. 4. Cf. Ex. 28:6-14.

Teraphim, v. 4. Cf. Judges, chs. 17 and 18.

What does the absence of these things indicate?

“To sit alone in the ruins of her life; to wail away her days in solitude; to brood over bitter memories beside the hearthstone on which she had kindled the fires of hell. Safe, yet—oh, how wretched—bearing the punishment of her fall in the outer darkness of a wasted and a shipwrecked life; . . . because he loved her, he could still believe in a day of penitence; believe with trembling hope that she could yet be cleansed, and restored, and saved.”

SIXTH WEEK. SIN, LOVE, HOPE.

SEVENTH DAY: HOSEA CHS. 1-3. HOSEA, HIS WIFE
AND CHILDREN.

Read these chapters through and try to realize the experience through which God caused His servant Hosea to pass, to qualify himself to speak to the people.

It has been suggested that the sections of these chapters have become displaced. Read them in the following order, 1:1-9; 3:1-5; 2:2-23; 1:10-2:1.

He is commanded to marry and does so; his wife proves false—she plays the harlot; he buys her back when she is to be sold into slavery; he continues to care for her, but not as his wife.

What expressions in these chapters symbolize God's great love for His people?

"Out of his own heart agony Hosea learned the nature of the sin of the people. They were playing the harlot, spending God's gifts in lewd traffic with other lovers. Out of that agony he has learned how God suffers over the sin of His people because of His undying love. . . . Thus equipped, he delivers his messages, and all through them will sound those deep notes of SIN, LOVE, HOPE."

Read Tennyson's "Guinevere."

PRAYER: "O Merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity, make me earnestly repent, and heartily to be sorry for all my misdoings; make the remembrance of them so burdensome and painful that I may flee to Thee with a troubled spirit and a contrite heart; and, O Merciful Lord, visit, comfort, relieve me. Amen."

Memorize 1 John 4:10.

SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE
PEOPLE.

FIRST DAY: HOSEA 4:1-7:7. MORAL CONDITION OF THE
PEOPLE.

What people was the prophet speaking about?

The prophecy, to which we have now had the introduction (chs. 1-3), begins here.

The general subject of the prophecy (4:1-14:9) is "A people in decay," and the prophet discusses first their *moral condition* (4:1-7:7).

Read rapidly to 7:7 with this in mind.

"So Arthur passed from Guinevere to his last battle for his land:

"Lo, I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: Do thou for thine own soul the rest.

.

I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay they never were the King's.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinned; and mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
"I loathe thee": yet not less, O Guinevere,
For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love through flesh hath wrought into my life
So far, that my doom is, I love thee still,
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.'"

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SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE PEOPLE.

SECOND DAY: HOSEA 4:1-5. ISRAEL'S CONDITION AND PUNISHMENT.

What is the charge brought against them? Vs. 1, 2.

What sins of omission?

What sins of commission?

Compare vs. 1 and 2 with Matt. 5:22, 28, and think whether you are guiltless.

What is to be the result? V. 3.

What does he mean by including beasts of the field, the birds and fishes?

Whose fault was it that they were in this condition?

What is the meaning of vs. 4, 5?

Read Ps. 15.

Read again 2 Kings 14:21 *et seq.* the accounts of the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and get a general idea of the condition of the people at this time.

The original title of the book probably contained only the words "In the days of Jeroboam," which apply to chs. 1-3; the names of the other kings were added to fix the date of the events in chs. 4-14.

SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE
PEOPLE.

THIRD DAY: HOSEA 4:6-10. THE PRIESTS ARE TO
BLAME.

Who does he say here was to blame for this condition?

How did there happen to be a lack of knowledge?

There is a need of some religious basis for conduct.
What was the duty of the priests?

The people will be what their leaders are, v. 9.

What kind of a God is described in vs. 6, 9? Cf. 5:6,
14; 8:13; 9:15, 17; 13:8, 15.

PRAYER: "Give me, O Lord, purity of lips, a clean and innocent heart, humility, fortitude, patience. Give me the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and godliness, and of Thy fear. Make me ever to seek Thy face with all my heart, all my soul, all my mind; grant me to have a contrite and humble heart in Thy presence. Amen."

SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE
PEOPLE.

FOURTH DAY: HOSEA 4:11-14. GROSS IMMORALITY.

Staff v. 12. Probably the diviner's wand, cf. Ezek. 21:21.

What condition of the people is described here?

Vs. 6-10 referred to the condition of the priests, the spiritual leaders; these words refer to the people and are an expansion of v. 9.

What was their sin? Note that this was a root sin. Cf. 11:1; 13:1 *et seq.*

Paraphrase of vs. 11-15:

"Immorality and intemperance always dim the intellect, as is clearly illustrated by the way in which this people instead of seeking Jehovah, consult the inanimate symbols of the Baal cult. That corrupt religion, which gives free license to the passions, had led them far astray from the true God. In connection with the rites of Baal the men have committed abominable excesses. In the light of such an example Jehovah cannot hold their daughters culpable, even though they have shamelessly bartered their chastity. Thus this stupid people are rapidly rushing on to their ruin."

Read Ps. 51.

SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE
PEOPLE.

FIFTH DAY: HOSEA 4:15-19. ISRAEL CANNOT BE SAVED.

Who is referred to by Ephraim (v. 17) and why?

What does Hosea mean by "*Ephraim is joined to idols*"?

What by, "*The wind hath wrapped her up in its wings*"? Cf. 8:7.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Let him alone,*" v. 17. "To suffer the pain of eternal loneliness. . . . It is against the instinct of humanity to be left alone. The little child calls out in terror as soon as it begins to have some sense of being left alone. The worst form of punishment that is known to penology is the solitary cell, the shutting up of a man alone." It was the man who was not in his right mind who cried out to Jesus, "Let us alone."

SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE
PEOPLE.

SIXTH DAY: HOSEA 4:1-19. THE CONDITION OF GOD'S
OWN PEOPLE.

What would you say was the condition of the people to whom Hosea delivered his message?

What charge does he bring against them?

Does the history in Kings sustain Hosea's charge?

“King succeeded king and dynasty dynasty with horrible rapidity. As in the days of the Barrack-Emperors of falling Rome, the purple was a sure mark for the dagger-thrust, and blood touched blood on the slippery footsteps of the throne. Universal confusion followed. There was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; there was nothing but swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, which called for an immediate and ravaging retribution.”

SEVENTH WEEK. CHARGE AGAINST THE
PEOPLE.

SEVENTH DAY : GEN. 32 :22-32.

Referring back to the study for the fifth week, second day, go over the outline of the history of the people of Israel, and under *I. The Beginning of the Chosen Nation as a Patriarchal Family*, fix in mind a few of the outstanding events of the book of Genesis. (Remember as you study these Old Testament books, the words of Jesus in John 5 :39, "*These are they that testify of Me.*")

1. The beginning of things, chs. 1-11. Make a list of the beginnings mentioned in these chapters.

2. Abraham, ch. 12.
3. Isaac, ch. 21.
4. Esau and Jacob, ch. 25.
5. Isaac and Jacob, chs. 27, 28.
6. Jacob and his sons, ch. 35.
7. In Egypt, ch. 46.

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EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

FIRST DAY: HOSEA 5:1-7. PRIESTS AND KING
REBUKED.

Chapter 5 tells of the corruption of the leaders—the King and the priests.

Who is addressed in this section?

Why does he name Mizpah and Tabor?

“Their doings will not suffer them to turn unto their God,” v. 4. Sin keeps men from God now just as much as it did then. Evil deeds forge a chain which binds us and makes us helpless.

Cf. vs. 4-7 with Isa. 59:2.

“Ephraim shall stumble,” v. 5. There is one who can save us from stumbling, Jude 24. Memorize this verse.

EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

SECOND DAY: HOSEA 5:8-15. SOUND THE ALARM.

Where were Ramah, Gibeah, and Beth-aven?

What is the figure here?

Why does he speak of Benjamin? V. 8.

What does "Behind thee, O Benjamin," mean?

Landmark, v. 10. The landmarks were under the protection of religion. Deut. 19:14; 27:17.

What is the sin described in v. 10?

What was the sin described in v. 11?

Write out in your own words the meaning of v. 12?

What does God say he will do in v. 15?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: v. 13: "So Ephraim and Judah went to the wrong person, and did not gain much by their application. The same fatal error is being perpetrated by multitudes among us still. The error is as ancient as Cain and as modern as to-day."

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EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

THIRD DAY: HOSEA 6:1-3. "LET US RETURN."

The words of Israel as they think over the words of
v. 14.

Write out in your own words what they say.

Compare with Luke 15:18.

Sin is sickness. Cf. Jer. 17:9 in the Authorized Version and Revised Version.

Learn the Books of the Old Testament in order:

HISTORICAL, 17.	POETICAL, 5.	PROPHETICAL, 17.	
Genesis.	Job.	<i>Major</i> , 5.	<i>Minor</i> , 12.
Exodus.	Psalms.	Isaiah.	Hosea.
Leviticus.	Proverbs.	Jeremiah.	Joel.
Numbers.	Ecclesiastes.	Lamentations.	Amos.
Deuteronomy.	Song of Solomon.	Ezekiel.	Obadiah.
Joshua.		Daniel.	Jonah.
Judges.			Micah.
Ruth.			Nahum.
1 and 2 Samuel.			Habakkuk
1 and 2 Kings.			Zephaniah
1 and 2 Chronicles.			Haggai.
Ezra			Zechariah.
Nehemiah.			Malachi.
Esther.			

EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

FOURTH DAY: HOSEA 6:4-11. WHAT GOD WANTS.

What does v. 1 tell us about God's anxiety for his own?

Where was Shechem? V. 9.

What was the trouble with their good intentions?
V. 4.

What is it God looks for? V. 6.

What is the difference between goodness and sacrifice? V. 6.

Notice here the awful condition of the people when the priests themselves, the religious leaders, committed murder. V. 9.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: How true it is that our "goodness is as a morning cloud!" v. 4. We receive spiritual impressions and decide to lead a Christian life, but fear of opposition, evil associates, sinful habits, all these dissipate the impressions as the sun dries up the morning cloud.

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EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

FIFTH DAY: HOSEA 7:1-7. THOSE WHO SHOULD
HELP ONLY HINDER.

Who is it that is guilty of the wickedness described here?

On the day of our king, v. 5. Either his coronation day or birthday.

What were their sins?

Give the sense of v. 4?

All their kings are fallen, v. 7. Four regicides are recorded within forty years. 2 Kings 15.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness," v. 2. God remembers sin! He remembers all kinds of sin, open and secret, great and small. God remembers sin! And men forget this. "They consider not in their hearts." It does seem as if men would not sin if they only remembered that God remembers.

EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

SIXTH DAY: HOSEA 4:1-7:7. A PEOPLE IN DECAY.

Read this section through rapidly, noting the following outline:

1. Morally, 4:1-7:7.
 - a. God's charge against His people, ch. 4.
 - b. Corruption of the leaders, ch. 5.
 - c. The condition of affairs, 6:1-7:7.

Familiarize yourself with the geography of the land as divided among the nations during the times of the Minor Prophets. Study the map and locate Israel, Judah, Babylon, Nineveh. Referring to Palestine, one writer says: "It is almost an epitome of the ancient world, when the ocean and the desert, the pastures of the wilderness and the terraced vineyards of the sunny hills, the cedars, fir-trees, and rhododendrons of Lebanon, the cornfields of Jezreel, and the oak-clad glades of Tabor, the shores of the lake of Galilee bright with shrubbery of oleander, the hot canebrakes and palm-groves of Jericho, represent in brief compass almost every variety of material condition which enters into the development of Eastern antiquity."

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EIGHTH WEEK. CORRUPTION OF LEADERS.

SEVENTH DAY :

Read Ps. 78:12-33.

Turn back again to the study for the fifth week, second day ; go over the outline once more. What was the First Division ?

Fix in mind to-day some of the striking events of the Second Division of the Old Testament History: *The migration of the Chosen Nation; out of Egypt to Sinai; forty years in the wilderness.* Numb. 10-36.

Who was their leader ?

How long was the distance ?

How long ought the journey to have taken ?

Why did so many die on the way ?

PRAYER: "Almighty God, Thou who didst lead Thy people of old ; Thou who didst reward those who diligently sought Thee, and who didst punish those who turned away from Thee, let me be ever found among Thy followers. O, keep me close to Thee, for when I wander from Thee then do I sin. May I have continually the joy of Thy presence. Amen."

NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

FIRST DAY: HOSEA 7:8-16. OUTWARD EVIDENCES OF
ISRAEL'S DECAY.

The prophet has been discussing "A people in decay," and has been considering their *moral* condition (4:1-7:7). He now takes up their *political* condition (7:8-10:15). Read this section through with this in mind.

What sins are mentioned here?

Ephraim is a cake not turned, v. 8. "How better describe a half-fed people, a half-cultured society, a half-lived religion, a half-hearted policy, than by a half-baked scone!" How well this describes the conditions in our great cities.

They seek help from foreign nations (11), not from God (14). How prone we are to turn everywhere for help except to God, until in great extremity, when there seems to be no other place to go, we go to Him. Cf. 5:13; 6:2.

Read Ps. 100.

PRAYER: "Sustain us through all the long day of this mortal life, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and life's fever is over. Then, O Lord, grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest and peace at last, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen."

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NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

SECOND DAY: HOSEA 8:1-7. IDOLATRY WILL BRING SORROW.

Here the prophet accuses them of setting up kings and gods not known to him. Have you ever done this in your life?

What was the "*calf of Samaria*"?

Notice the short clauses which reflect the prophet's emotion as he speaks.

How old heathenism is! In Hosea's time they needed the message that men need to-day: there is but one God who is Lord of all. "My little children, guard yourselves from idols," 1 John 5:21.

Moral law works as surely as natural law: "Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind"; "plow wickedness, reap iniquity," 10:13. Why is it that some people do not believe this?

"Dear Lord and Bridegroom, I here vow and promise to Thee surely, that all which Thou willest I also will. Come sickness, come health, come pleasure or pain, sweet or bitter, cold or heat, wet or dry, whatever Thou willest that do I also will; and desire altogether to come out from my own will, and to yield a whole and willing obedience unto Thee, and never to desire aught else, either in will or thought; only let Thy will be accomplished in me in time and eternity." Tauler's Covenant, 1340 A.D.

NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

THIRD DAY: HOSEA 8:8-14. INTO CAPTIVITY.

What is the meaning of v. 8?

What is the figure in v. 9: "*Like a wild ass by himself*"?

V. 11. What ought to have been a means of grace has become an instrument of sin.

What is the meaning of "*They shall return to Egypt*"?
V. 13.

What sins are mentioned in v. 14?

What is the punishment to be? V. 14. Cf. Amos 1:4, 7, 12 *et al.* Matt. 3:12.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*They shall return to Egypt,*" v. 13. God forbid that any of us should go back into the condition we were in before He called us out of the bondage of sin. Abraham's cry for his own son was, "Beware that thou bring not my son thither again," Gen. 22:6. And is there not a warning here for us? Are you taking any man's son back into sin?

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NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

FOURTH DAY: HOSEA 9:1-9. THE COMING CALAMITY—
EXILE.

What is to happen to them? Vs. 1-3.

The bread of mourners, v. 4. An emblem of utter impurity.

What does the prophet mean by “*They shall not pour out wine-offerings*,” v. 4?

What is the meaning of v. 5?

A day of reckoning always comes, v. 7; cf. 8:7.

What were the *days of Gibeah*, v. 9? Use marginal references.

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NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

FIFTH DAY: HOSEA 9:10-17. GOD WILL SCATTER
THEM.

God has done everything for Israel. When He took them up they were like the poor wilderness grapes—of no account.

What was Baal-peor? V. 1.

What is the meaning of "*All their wickedness is in Gilgal*"? V. 15.

What great punishment is predicted in vs. 14, 16?

How wonderfully the history of the Jews confirms the prophecy of v. 17—"Wanderers among the nations."

"*Became abominable like that which they loved*," v. 10.
A man soon becomes like the thing he loves.

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NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

SIXTH DAY: HOSEA 7:8-9:17. POLITICAL DECAY.

What signs of political decay are seen in the following verses?

7:8, 9.

7:11.

8:4.

8:9.

What was the real trouble?

7:13, 16.

8:1.

8:12.

9:1.

What is to be the result? V. 17.

NINTH WEEK. SIN, SORROW, EXILE.

SEVENTH DAY :

Read Ps. 78:65-72.

Looking back over the studies for the fifth week, second day, seventh week, seventh day, and eighth week, seventh day, what were the first two divisions of the historical table?

I.

II.

After getting into the promised land we see (III) them in their effort toward a secular government :

1. Conquest of Canaan (Joshua).
2. The government of the Judges (Judges).
3. Establishment of the Kings (1 and 2 Samuel).

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TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

FIRST DAY: HOSEA 10:1-8. SIN AND ITS REWARD.

What sin is described in vs. 1-4?

Calves of Beth-aven, v. 5; cf. 8:5.

Their country is to be destroyed and a time is coming when they will long for death.

"*Their heart is divided*," v. 2. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Matt. 6:24.

PRAYER: "O God, who requirest the hearts of all Thy children, deliver us from all sloth in Thy work, all coldness in Thy cause; and grant that by looking unto Thee we may rekindle our love, and by waiting upon Thee may renew our strength, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

SECOND DAY: HOSEA 10:9-15. WE REAP WHAT WE
SOW.

The days of Gibeah were how long before this? Cf. Judges 19:22-30.

V. 11. Israel has had an easy time, like an ox treading out corn and eating it; now she shall work hard like an ox who has to plow.

What is the substance of vs. 12-15?

This ends the section on the political decay of the people.

G. A. Smith says: "The political decay of Israel, then, so deeply figured in all these chapters, must end in utter collapse. Let us sum up the gradual features of this decay: the substance of the people scattered abroad; the national spirit dissipated; the national prestige humbled; the kings mere puppets; the prophets corrupted; the national vigor sapped by impurity; the idolatry conscious of its impotence."

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TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

THIRD DAY: HOSEA 11:1-7. PS. 103. GOD'S LOVE.

"From the thick jungle of Hosea's travail, the eleventh chapter breaks like a high and open mound."

Jehovah did not love Israel because he was His son, but He called him to be His son because He loved him, v. 1, John 15:16.

"God's eyes, that passed unheeding the adult princes of the world, fell upon this little slave boy, and He loved him and gave him a career." Cf. Matt. 18:2, 3.

What is referred to in v. 1?

Note what Israel is called in v. 1. What had they been called in 2:20?

Read 2 Kings 17:13-17, and see how true v. 2 is.

Try to realize the beauty of v. 3. God, as a kind father, trying to teach the infant nation to walk when they were too weak to go alone.

God is our Father, cf. Rom. 8:15; 1 John 3:1-3. Memorize these verses in 1 John.

God was a kind master to them, v. 4.

What is the meaning of "*I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws*"? V. 4.

It does no good, vs. 5-7.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Bands of love.*" "Men speak of love as the Spirit's *wing*. Yet truly it is rather the Spirit's cord. It keeps me chained to you. It refuses to let me soar without you. It bids me lift your weight, your pain. It holds me to the ground where you are lying. It compels me to bear your cross."

TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

FOURTH DAY: HOSEA II:8-11. THE LONG-SUFFERING
GOD.

These verses have been rightly called "the greatest passage in Hosea." Try to realize their beauty.

"God will try once more," is the substance of 8-11.

What is the meaning of "How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim"? Cf. marginal references.

The conversion of St. Paul is an illustration of the truth stated in these verses.

What reasons does God give for not giving up Israel?

Read Ps. 42.

"God's changeless love! The wandering one
Forsakes, forgets, dishonors; yet,
Repenting, going home, is met
With no reproach—'Welcome, My son!'"

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TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

FIFTH DAY: I SAMUEL 15:1-30. SAUL.

Referring once more to the historical table in the study of the fifth week, second day, write out the divisions.

I.

II.

III.

This brings us to the kings. Compare the historical table at the end of the book and remember the order of the first three kings—kings of the united kingdom—Saul, David, Solomon.

Read the following for incidents in Saul's life: I Sam. 9:1, 2, 21; 10:1, 24; 11:14; 13:1; 14:31-35; 16:22, 23; 20:1; 28:8-19; 31:1-6.

Why did Saul fail?

TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

SIXTH DAY : I SAMUEL 16:1-13. DAVID.

Try to fix in mind to-day a few of the leading events in the life of David.

What is he called in Acts 13:22?

A servant of Saul, 1 Sam. 16:20-23.

Fights Goliath, 17:49.

Hated by Saul, 19:18; 22:1, 2.

Spares Saul, 24:3, 4; 26:9-12.

Made king, 2 Sam. 2:1; 5:1-5.

His sin, 11:1-3, 15-17, 26, 27. Ps. 32.

Absalom rebels, 15:1.

Sorrow for Absalom, 18:31-33.

His death, 1 Kings 2:1-11.

“David is the most luminous figure and the most gifted personage in Israelitish history, surpassed in ethical greatness and general historical importance only by Moses, the man of God. It is not possible to estimate what David did for Israel: Israel as a people, as a representative of political life, as a concrete quantity in the development of universal history, as a nation in the fullest sense of the word, is exclusively his work.” Cornill.

“Adieu! thou sweet Psalmist; thou royal prophet; thou tempted, tried, stricken, erring, yet, in the main, true-hearted man of God; we shall know thee better when we meet above. . . . Now is thy wish gratified, now is thy prayer answered, for now beholdest thou the beauty of the Lord, and inquirest in His temple!”

TENTH WEEK. SOWING AND REAPING.

SEVENTH DAY: I KINGS 4:29-34. SOLOMON.

To-day we have a brief outline of the life of the third great king of Israel, David's son, Solomon.

King, I Kings 2:10.

Marriage, 3:1.

His prayer, 3:6-9.

Treaty with Hiram, 5:1-6.

Builds the temple, 7:51.

His prayer, 8:22-26.

His apostasy, 11:1-8.

His death, 11:42, 43.

What was the trouble with Solomon?

"There is, perhaps, no other personage of Israelitish history of whose true character and its historical significance it is so difficult to get a clear conception and give a correct picture as Solomon; for what we know of him is scant and self-contradictory. It is possible to represent him as an Oriental despot of the most common stamp and support every trait of the picture thus drawn with Bible references, and to take credit into the bargain for one's objectivity and freedom from prejudice; but such a judgment would be absolutely unhistorical: Solomon cannot have been an ordinary and insignificant man—on this point history speaks loud and clear."

ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

FIRST DAY: HOSEA 11:12-12:6. ISRAEL'S
INGRATITUDE.

Contrast Israel's feelings toward God with God's feeling toward them. Hasn't it always been so?

The two nations are here referred to: Ephraim and Judah. The division took place about 937 B.C. Read 1 Kings 12:1-17. This is one of the great events in Hebrew history and should be remembered. The Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, more often called Israel, was composed of ten tribes, having its capital at Samaria; the Southern Kingdom, Judah, was composed of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and had its capital at Jerusalem. The ten tribes disappeared; Christ came from the tribe of Judah.

What is referred to in vs. 3 and 4?

What is meant by "*Jehovah is His memorial name*"?
V. 5.

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ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

SECOND DAY: HOSEA 12:7-14. BLINDED BY
PROSPERITY.

What sins are enumerated here?

V. 13. Moses is called a prophet; this helps us to form an idea of what the prophets were.

Cf. v. 8 with Luke 12:16-21.

How does God say He will treat them?

What is the meaning of "*Jehovah, thy God from the land of Israel*"? V. 9.

Why is v. 13 used?

PRAYER: "Almighty and most merciful God, who hast sent this book to be the revelation of Thy great love to man, and of Thy power and will to save him, grant that our study of it may not have been in vain by the callousness or carelessness of our hearts, but that by it we may be confirmed in penitence, lifted in hope, made strong for service, and above all filled with the true knowledge of Thee and of Thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen."

ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

THIRD DAY: HOSEA 13:1-8. IDOLATRY AND DEATH.

Final review of Israel's mistakes and the consequences.
Ch. 13.

What does the prophet say was the cause of Israel's downfall? Vs. 1-3.

Notice the beauty of v. 3.

What events are referred to in vs. 4-6?

What is the figure in vs. 7 and 8?

Israel, the Northern Kingdom, was destroyed, and the ten tribes, of which it was originally composed, disappeared utterly. "The problem of the lost tribes, which has so much attraction for some speculators, is a purely fanciful one. The people whom Hosea and Amos describe were not fitted to maintain themselves apart from the heathen among whom they dwelt. Scattered among strange nations, they accepted the service of strange gods, and, losing their distinctive religion, lost also their distinctive existence."

"It is obvious that the wild theories concerning the fate of the 'lost ten tribes of Israel' are entirely without foundation, since they were never lost."

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ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

FOURTH DAY: HOSEA 13:9-15. "TO WHOM SHALL
WE GO?"

He who might have been their greatest helper is
their worst foe, v. 1.

What is the meaning of vs. 10, 11?

Cf. v. 12 with Gal. 6:7.

What use does Paul make of v. 14?

"Tell Jesus when the burden seems too great for thee
to bear,
Go lay it at the feet of Christ, and know that He will
care,
And tell Him all the little things, that come to cloud
your way,
The puzzles and perplexities, that trouble you to-day.
I tell Him all the story now, no other friend can be,
In morning light or evening shades, what Jesus is to
me."

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: v. 9: The sinner destroys him-
self. He sows and he reaps. Gal. 6:7. God longs to
save him even from himself, but he will not. Cf. 11:8.

ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

FIFTH DAY: HOSEA 14:1-9. TRUE PRAYER OF REPENTANCE AND ITS ANSWER.

The long-suffering heavenly Father pleads with them to return, v. 1.

What caused their fall? V. 1.

Notice how in their prayer they are to renounce all trust in other helpers: Assyria, horses, idols.

Memorize v. 4.

It seems almost impossible to believe that God could make such an offer to this sinful nation as is made in vs. 4-8.

What is the significance of such figures as are used in these verses. Cf. Ps. 1.

EPILOGUE, v. 9. Would not this be a good verse to associate with these studies on the old prophets?

ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

SIXTH DAY: THE MESSAGE OF HOSEA.

Read Ps. 19.

"The chapters of Hosea are drenched with the dew of God's mercy, of which no drop falls on those of Amos, but there God is rather the roar as of a lion, the flash as of lightning. Both prophets bid Israel return to God, but Amos means by that, to justice, truth, and purity, while Hosea describes a husband, father, long-suffering and full of mercy. 'I bid you come back,' cries Amos; but Hosea pleads, 'If only you were aware of what God is, you would come back.' 'Come back to God and live,' cries Amos; but Hosea, 'Come back to God, for He is love.' Amos calls, 'Come back at once, for there is but little time left till God must visit you in judgment'; but Hosea, 'Come back at once, for God has loved you so long and so kindly.' Amos cries, 'Turn, for in front of you is destruction'; but Hosea, 'Turn, for behind you is God.' And that is why all Hosea's preaching of repentance is so evangelical. 'I will arise and go to my *Father*.'"

The Message of Hosea:

1. Repentance is returning unto God: "To Hosea repentance is no mere change in the direction of one's life. It is turning back upon one's self, a retracing of one's footsteps, a confession and acknowledgment of what one has abandoned."

2. The sin against love: God loves us with unutterable love. In sin we turn away from such love, but He loves us still. The father goes to meet the prodigal son.

ELEVENTH WEEK. "THE YEARNING GOD."

SEVENTH DAY: HOSEA.

Read Ps. 40.

"Hosea is a man of emotion rather than of logic, a poet rather than a preacher, and the unity of his book is maintained through the sudden transitions and swift revulsions of feeling characteristic of his style, not by a well-planned symmetry of argument such as we find in Amos, but by a constant undercurrent of faith in the identity of Jehovah's love to man with that pure and unselfish affection which binds the prophet himself to his guilty and fallen nation."

While it is difficult to make an outline of Hosea, it would be helpful to run over the studies and see what you can do.

Key thought. The following are suggested; which would you select?

God's mercy and man's misery.

God's great love.

Spiritual adultery.

Key word: Love.

Key text: 14:9.

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TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

FIRST DAY: MICAH I:1. I. TITLE OF BOOK.

The author, Micah—a native of Moresheth-gath, a town of Judah, I:1, 9. “In him Amos lives again. Like Amos, a dweller in the country and a man of the people, his straightforwordness and lively sense of justice suffered itself to be neither silenced nor repressed.”

The date of the book: 740 B.C. Cf. Isa. I:1; Hos. I:1; Jer. 26:17-19.

Micah and Isaiah were contemporaries. “It pleased God that a testimony should be borne by the mouth of two, and that the holy Isaiah should be assisted by his friend, and, as it were, his colleague.” Calvin.

Isaiah views the condition of affairs from the standpoint of the leaders; Micah from that of the humble folk.

Against whom did he prophesy? V. 1.

Notice the names of the cities. Why?

Read 2 Kings 16 to get the historical setting of the prophecy.

“In touch, then, with the capital, feeling every throb of its folly and its panic, but standing on that border which must, as he believed, bear the brunt of the invasion that its crimes were attracting, Micah lifted up his voice. They were days of great excitement. The words of Amos and Hosea had been fulfilled upon Northern Israel. Should Judah escape, whose injustice and impurity were as flagrant as her sisters? It were vain to think so. The Assyrians had come up to the northern border. Isaiah was expecting their assault upon Mount Zion. The Lord's controversy was not closed. Micah will summon the whole earth to hear the old indictment and the still unexhausted sentence.”

TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

SECOND DAY: MICAH 1:2-7. PUNISHMENT COMING.

II. Threat of judgment, 1:2-16.

I. Punishment is coming on Samaria, 1:2-7.
Where was Samaria?

Who is speaking in vs. 2-4?

What does he say?

God speaks in vs. 5-7.

Why were they to be punished?

How was Samaria the sin of Jacob? V. 5.

What had Jerusalem to do with Judah? V. 5.

Destruction: of city, v. 6; of false religions, v. 7.

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TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

THIRD DAY: MICAH 1:8-16. A LAMENT.

2. The prophet's lament, vs. 8-16.

What is the meaning of "*I will go stripped and naked*"? V. 8.

Why does he use the words *jackals* and *ostriches*? V. 8.

Why "*tell it not in Gath*"? V. 10. Cf. 2 Sam. 1:20.

Locate on the map the various cities mentioned here.

On "*I have rolled myself in the dust*," v. 10, see 2 Sam. 13:19.

Why does he use the expression, "*Make thee bald*"? V. 16.

State the substance of these verses.

There is a play upon words here which cannot be reproduced. Dr. Morgan says it is as if we said: "In Philadelphia there is no brotherly love."

"Having thus pictured the doom which threatened his people, Micah turns to declare the sins for which it has been sent upon them."

TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

FOURTH DAY: MICAH 2:1-5. THE CAUSE STATED.

III. The cause of the coming judgment; the sins of the great. Chs. 2 and 3.

I. The sin and its punishment.

They do not sin accidentally; they calmly in the time of reflection devise evil.

What is the sin described here? Cf. 1 Kings 21.

Note *devise* in vs. 1 and 3. Gal. 6:7.

Punishment is to follow sin.

What is the meaning of v. 5? Note that God makes the punishment fit the crime.

PRAYER: "O God, we are so prone to do that which is evil in Thy sight, we devise iniquity, even as Thy people of old. But Thou, Lord, art our helper, Thou art merciful and long-suffering; look upon us in our weakness, and with Thine own mighty power guard us from the sins into which in our own strength we so often fall. Make us strong to do Thy will in the strength of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

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TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

FIFTH DAY: MICAH 2:6-13. THE REQUEST AND HIS REPLY.

2. He is asked not to prophesy, v. 6.

Have you ever felt uncomfortable under the preaching of some man of God. Cf. Isa. 30:9, 10; Amos 7:12.

What must have been the condition of the people at such a time?

3. The prophet's answer, vs. 7-11.

"This is the evil—the ease with which evil is done in the country."

What sin is referred to in v. 8?

The kind of preacher they liked was one who tells them things they like to hear, v. 11. Isn't this very largely true now?

Notice that vs. 12, 13 are an interruption to the thought. Some think they are the words of the false prophets.

TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

SIXTH DAY: MICAH 3:1-8. SINS OF THE GREAT.

What class is addressed here? Vs. 1-4.

What was their sin? Vs. 2, 3.

“ O masters, lords and rulers of all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing, distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light,
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes? ”

Seers, diviners, v. 7. We know little of what the Seers were; they were like prophets, 1 Sam. 9:9. Diviners were those who thought themselves inspired.

Vs. 5-8 are addressed to the false prophets; they shall have no vision. God help us when we cease to see visions. See the promises in Joel. Acts 2:17.

Note the true prophet's power, v. 8. What was it?

Compare v. 8 with Acts 1:8. The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament, too.

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TWELFTH WEEK. SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

SEVENTH DAY: MICAH 3:9-12. HOPELESS CORRUPTION OF THE LEADERS.

To whom are these verses addressed?

What three classes of the people are mentioned in v. 11?

What was the sin of each?

What was their common sin?

What was to be the result?

“One hundred and fifteen years after Jerusalem was rescued from the hands of Sennacherib, the prophecy of Micah was fulfilled. Jerusalem became a heap of ruins, the temple a smoking pile, and the people were led away into far captivity.”

According to Jer. 26:18, 19, this prophecy of Micah's made a deep impression upon king and people.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY:

“God give us men! A time like this demands
Great hearts, strong minds, true faith, and willing
hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;

Men who possess opinions and a will;

Men who have honor, men who cannot die.”

THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE
TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

FIRST DAY: MICAH CHS. 1-3. JUDGMENT BECAUSE OF
SIN.

What are we taught as to the nature of God? 1:2, 3;
2:3; 3:11.

What is it that brings punishment? 1:5; 3:4, 6, 12.

What are we taught of God's omnipotence? 1:6; 2:3.

What classes had sinned? 2:1, 2, 8; 3:1, 9.

Fill in the references in the following outline:

- I. Title.
- II. Threat of judgment.
 1. Punishment is coming.
 2. Micah's lament.
- III. The cause of the coming judgment: the sins of the great.
 1. Sin and its punishment.
 2. Asked not to prophesy.
 3. His answer.
 4. Sins of the great.
 5. Hopelessly corrupt leaders.

THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE
TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

SECOND DAY: MICAH 4:1-5. ISA. 2:2-4. IDEAL
HAPPINESS.

IV. Visions of the triumphant future. Chs. 4, 5.

How is it that both Micah and Isaiah prophesy in the same words? See another striking example of this in 2 Peter 2 and Jude.

What is meant by *latter days*? V. 1.

What is going to happen?

While these studies are based on the Minor Prophets, it will be well as we proceed to try to catch the message of the other prophets. Isaiah and Micah being contemporaries, we might think to-day of that greatest of the Hebrew prophets, Isaiah, who appears in Jerusalem at the end of the reign of Uzziah (740 B.C.), a hundred years before Jeremiah. He "was a child when Amos appeared at Bethel, and a youth when Hosea began to prophesy in north Israel." He prophesied under Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. He had constant access to the court and presence of the king. "Seated at the tiller he guides by the divine compass the little ship of his fatherland through the rocks and breakers of a wild and stormy period." His book is divided into two distinct sections. Chs. 1-39, 40-66; and the plain difference in these two parts has caused some scholars to think that they were written by different men. The first section contains various prophecies concerning Judah, Israel, and foreign nations; the second section is a continuous prophecy of "Israel's restoration from exile in Babylon."

Read Isa. 53.

THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE
TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

THIRD DAY: MICAH 4:6-5:1. EXILE AND RESTORA-
TION.

What day is referred to in v. 6?

Why gather the lame?

Some one has said that Christianity is the "survival of the unfit." Cf. Luke 14:21.

God is to become their king; it is a prophecy of restoration.

Who is addressed in v. 8?

What is the substance of vs. 9-5:1.

Read Ps. 46.

The fourth great division of the history of the Hebrew people (see study for fifth week, second day) is *The Chosen Nation under a secular kingship side by side with a Theocracy*.

1. Reign of David and Solomon. 2 Sam. 2-22; 1 Kings 1-11.

2. The Schism of the Kingdom of Judah and Israel side by side. 1 Kings 12 to 2 Kings 17.

3. The Kingdom of Judah to its Captivity. 2 Kings 18-25.

THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE
TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

FOURTH DAY: MICAH 5:2-9. THE COMING KING.

What prophecy have we here? See Matt. 2:6; John 7:42.

"Whose goings forth are from old?" V. 1. Cf. Isa. 63:9.

What are we told about the Messiah in these verses, omitting vs. 6, 7?

Christ's "lowly origin was a fact. He sprang from the most democratic of peoples. His ancestor was a shepherd, and His mother a peasant girl. He Himself was a carpenter: at home, as His parables show, in the fields, and the folds and the barns of His country; with the servants of the great houses, with the unemployed in the markets, with the woman in the hovel seeking one piece of silver, with the shepherd on the moors seeking the lost sheep. The poor had the Gospel preached to them; and the common people heard Him gladly."

THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE
TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

FIFTH DAY: MICAH 5:10-15. DEMORALIZING INFLUENCES TO BE CUT OFF.

This refers to the same day as 4:6, a day of restoration and rejoicing; what, then, is the meaning of vs. 10, 11?

Soothsayers, v. 12. "Truth tellers," more precisely here diviners of the clouds.

In v. 12 he refers again to those who had led them astray.

What is the meaning of vs. 12, 13?

What title can be given to this section of the book of Micah?

This might have been the end of the book: *Destruction* (Chs. 1-3); *Deliverance* (Chs. 4, 5). This is God's plan of salvation: man lost, destroyed by his own sin; saved, delivered by God through Jesus Christ. "He took me up out of the horrible pit."

PRAYER: "Almighty God, Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, search my heart to-day and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting; take out of my life everything that works against Thee, all ambitions, desires, thoughts which hinder my intercourse with Thee; may the iniquities of my heart which have separated Thee from me be forever blotted out through the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

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THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

SIXTH DAY: MICAH CHS. 4, 5. DELIVERANCE.

What blessings are to come to them? 4:1, 3, 6, 10, 13; 5:9, 10-15.

Who is to do all this? 4:6, 7, 10, 13 *et seq.*

Note the number of times "I will" occurs in these chapters.

Make a list of the things Jehovah says He will do.

What is God's people to become? 4:5; 5:7, 8.

In Micah we have God's controversy with His people. He pleads with them to be at one with Him, for they cannot go on together. "Enoch walked with God," but it was because they were agreed. "Shall two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3.

THIRTEENTH WEEK. VISIONS OF THE
TRIUMPHANT FUTURE.

SEVENTH DAY: MICAH 5:2. THE MESSIANIC PROMISE.

How is this promise used in the New Testament?

Notice in the following passages how the Messianic promise increased in definiteness through the Old Testament:

Gen. 3:15. Of the seed of the woman.

Gen. 9:26, 27. Of the family of Noah, line of Shem.

Gen. 12:1-3. Of the seed of Abraham.

Gen. 49:10. Of the tribe of Judah.

2 Sam. 7:11-16. Of the house of David.

Micah 5:1-4. To be born in Bethlehem.

Memorize 5:2.

“O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.”

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

FIRST DAY: MICAH 6:1-8. THE REASONABLENESS OF
RELIGION.

Part V of the book begins here, chs. 6 and 7. It might be called "The Lord's controversy with His people."

"These few verses (6:1-8), in which Micah sets forth the true essence of religion, may raise a well-founded title to be counted as the most important in the prophetic literature. Like almost no others, they afford us an insight into the innermost nature of the religion of Israel, as delivered by the prophets."

The prophet speaks in vs. 1, 2.

Who does he call to hear, and why?

God speaks in vs. 3-5.

What does God call them?

What is God's attitude toward them?

Why does He refer them to the old history?

George A. Smith, commenting on this fact, says: "It is the fact of redemption which forms the main ground of His appeal." See "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price."

The people speak in vs. 6, 7.

What is the meaning of what they say?

Hear the prophet's answer in v. 8.

What is it?

It has been called "The greatest saying in the Old Testament." Cf. Zech. 7:8-10.

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

SECOND DAY: MICAH 6:9-16. DESTRUCTION IS COM-
ING.

God answers.

Hear ye the rod, v. 9, *i. e.*, Hear ye the prophecy of punishment.

What sins does He call their attention to in vs. 9-11.

To whom does he refer by the words, *The Man of Wisdom*, v. 9?

Why has God punished them? V. 13.

Where have we had a prediction similar to that in vs. 14, 15.

What were "*The statutes of Omri*"? V. 16.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY, vs. 6-8: How shall I come to God? Shall I do some outward act? "Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings?" No. May I not please Him by giving. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams?" No. Perhaps by suffering I can win my way to Him. "Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression?" No. What, then? "By *being*. By being just and merciful and humble before our God. It is the answer of all the prophets; it is the answer of all the apostles; it is the answer of Christ Himself. God needs not our services, He needs not our gifts, least of all does He need our suffering; but He needs us—our hearts, our lives, our love."

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

THIRD DAY: MICAH 7:1-6. THE TIMES ARE BAD.

The reply of the people. "One of the most poignant criticisms of a commercial community which has ever appeared in literature."

The people, speaking as one man, say: "I am all alone; there is no company of us—no cluster."

The godly man has perished—no righteous men are left in the land, v. 2.

What sins are enumerated?

Why are the symbols of a brier and thorn hedge appropriate? V. 4.

Vs. 5, 6. Those who should be friends are now enemies.

"Micah depicts the sufferings of the peasantry at the hands of their lords from much closer personal observation than was possible to Isaiah as a resident of the capital. He speaks as a man of the people, and reveals to us, as no other prophet does, the feelings of the commonalty toward their oppressors." The same thing is going on to-day; can you mention some instances?

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

FOURTH DAY: MICAH 7:7-17. ISRAEL'S CONFESSION
AND PRAYER.

See the contrast in vs. 6 and 7.

A man could not trust his own family, he could trust God. "My God will hear me."

Note the confession in v. 9. Cf. Luke 15:18, 21. 1 John 1:9.

The prophet assures them that it is all right. "Your wall will be rebuilt in the day you return to God," vs. 11-13.

What do they pray for in vs. 14-17?

PRAYER: "Who is a God like unto Thee, O God; that pardoneth iniquity and delighteth in mercy. Thou hast so often turned to us again when we have turned away from Thee into sin and misery; Thou hast trodden our iniquities under Thy feet, Thou hast cast our sins into the depths of the sea; unto Thee, and Thee alone, do we look for salvation. Be gracious to us and cause Thy face to shine upon us and grant us Thy peace. Amen."

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

FIFTH DAY: MICAH 7:18-20. A HYMN OF PRAISE.

What attributes of God does he dwell on in this lyric poem?

What will God do?

Memorize v. 19.

Why "to Jacob" and "to Abraham," v. 20, who had been dead so long? Cf. Rev. 6:9-11.

What promises are referred to in v. 20? Cf. Isa. 12:1-6.

How will God treat our sin if we will let Him? V. 19. Cf. Isa. 38:17; Jer. 31:34.

"*He will have compassion upon us,*" v. 19. Cf. Matt. 9:36.

"Subdual of iniquities and casting of sins into the depths are expressions instinct with allusion to the ever-memorable escape of Israel from Pharaoh in the Red Sea. Our iniquities and sins are the Egyptians that pursue us, making our lives wretched, and bent on dragging us back into captivity. The Lord come between us and them, and cast them into a deep sleep from which they shall never awake to molest us. Then shall we thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord for the subdual of iniquities, the victory over sin, which is by His Grace, not by our prowess."

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

SIXTH DAY: MICAH 6:8. RIGHTEOUSNESS, MERCY,
HUMILITY.

This great saying deserves to be studied by itself.

What three things does the prophet say God asks His people to do?

He seems to sum up the teaching of Amos, "Doing justly"; Hosea, "Loving-kindness"; and Isaiah, "Walking humbly."

Memorize this verse.

"It is no mere religion of legal obedience that these words proclaim. Jehovah requires of man not only to *do*, but to *love* mercy. A heart that delights in acts of piety and loving-kindness, the humility that walks in lowly communion with God—these are the things in which Jehovah takes pleasure, and this is the teaching of the law and the prophets, on which our Lord Himself has set His seal (Matt. 22:37 *et seq.*)."

"An expressive activity is necessary to the student of the Bible."

FOURTEENTH WEEK. GOD'S CONTRO-
VERSY.

SEVENTH DAY: MICAH CHS. 1-7.

Run over the studies on Micah and write out the following outline:

I. 1:1.

II. 1:2-16.

III. Chs. 2 and 3.

IV. Chs. 4 and 5.

V. Chs. 6 and 7.

Key thought: Judgment followed by redemption. "The supreme authority in all the affairs of men is God."

Key word: Controversy.

Key text: 6:2.

The Message of Micah: "Micah's message is conveniently summarized in ch. 6:8, and it is obvious as we read it that he has profited in no slight measure by the teaching of his predecessors. Amos had emphasized righteousness, or 'doing justly,' as the essence of his teaching; Hosea the duty of loving-kindness, or the mercy that is kindled in the human breast as a reflection of the divine; and Isaiah, the sublime thought of holiness, or divine majesty, before which man can only walk humbly, and tremble at His word. And now the prophet of Moresheth-gath combines all three: he embraces righteousness, mercy, and humility in one supreme requirement."

FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

FIRST DAY: ZEPHANIAH 1:1-6. JUDGMENT
THREATENED.

I. Title 1:1. Notice in the Modern Reader's Bible this is printed as a title-page. Such it might well be.

The date of the book is fixed by the reference to King Josiah, 640-609 B.C.

What do we know about this prophet?

The fact that he is careful to trace his pedigree back to Hezekiah, his great-grandfather, leads us to believe that this was the king of that name.

He speaks as one who lived in a city—Jerusalem, vs. 4, 5.

Against which nation does he speak? V. 4.

“The conditions reflected are twofold—the idolatrous and sceptical state of the people and an impending invasion.”

II. The Threat of Judgment, 1:2-18.

Everything to be destroyed, vs. 2 and 3.

Judah and Jerusalem to be destroyed, vs. 4-6.

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FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

SECOND DAY: ZEPHANIAH 1:7-18. DIES IRA.

He continues his description of impending destruction. God has prepared a sacrificial feast, v. 7.

Who is to be destroyed?

What does he mean by "*such as are clothed with foreign apparel*"? V. 8. Cf. Matt. 11:8.

What kind of people are intended by "*those that leap over the threshold*"? V. 9.

In vs. 10-13 we have his description of the city in ruins. What was the "*Fish gate*"? V. 10. Cf. Neh. 3:1-3.

What was "*the second quarter*"? V. 10. Cf. 2 Kings 22:14.

What is the meaning of v. 11?

Notice how thorough the destruction is to be: God is going to take a lamp and look into the dark corners, v. 12. Cf. Amos 9:2, 3.

The terrible day, vs. 14-18.

It is near, v. 14. What are its characteristics? Vs. 15-18.

In the Vulgate v. 15 begins "*Dies ira, dies illa.*" These words were adopted by Thomas of Celano as the opening words of his splendid hymn on the last judgment:

"Day of vengeance, without morrow,
Earth shall end in flame and sorrow,
As from saint and seer we borrow."

FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

THIRD DAY: ZEPHANIAH 2:1-3. REPENT!

III. An admonition to repent. 2:1-3:7.

Study the meaning of repentance as shown in the following references: Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 26:20; Matt. 3:8.

“For what is true repentance but in thought—
Not even in inmost thought to think again
The sins that made the past so pleasant to us.”

Compare v. 3 with 1:12.

In Josiah's thirteenth year (627 B.C.), while Zephaniah was speaking, the call comes to one of the greatest of the prophets, Jeremiah, and for more than forty years he lived among his people, suffering as only He of whom he was a type, Jesus Christ, suffered (cf. 20:2; 11:21; 36:19, 26; 38:4). His life was one long sorrow (9:2; 5:10; 20:14). He died at last far from home in Egypt. He has been called “The prophet of the bleeding heart and the iron will.” The first thirty-five chapters of his book are devoted to prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem, and the last six have to do with Egypt and other foreign nations; between them is a historical section of nine chapters telling about the collection of the prophecies into a volume. Read the verses mentioned above.

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FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

FOURTH DAY: ZEPHANIAH 2:4-15. WHOLE EARTH TO
BE DESTROYED.

Study this section with the map and notice how all points of the compass are included.

West, vs. 4-7. Locate these places on the map.

East, vs. 8-11. What fate was to come upon these nations?

South, v. 12.

North, vs. 13-15.

God rules all nations, v. 4. Cf. Zech. 9:1-7; Amos 1:3-2:3.

What is the prophet's purpose in telling Judah that all these nations are to suffer?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: What a blessed thing it would be if we could learn by observation; but, no; most of us must have the experience ourselves before we learn. We see God visiting the sins of the fathers upon the third and fourth generations of them that hate Him, but we are not taught thereby.

FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

FIFTH DAY: ZEPHANIAH 3:1-7. STILL ANOTHER CALL.

To Jerusalem: Repent. V. 1 refers to Jerusalem.
What was her sin? V. 2.

What classes are referred to in vs. 3 and 4?

What were their respective sins?

God is contrasted with the wicked rulers, v. 5.

What is the purpose of v. 6?

It was no use, v. 7.

Read Ps. 14.

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FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

SIXTH DAY: ZEPHANIAH 3:8-20. THE PROMISE TO THE FAITHFUL.

This is Part IV of the book.
What is the substance of v. 8?

In vs. 14-20 we have the *Song of the Redeemed*.
Read Ps. 126.
What is the substance of this song?

“To Zephaniah has fallen the lot of uttering the very sweetest love-song in the Old Testament: That exquisite picture of the motherhood of God which we have in the third chapter, in which he gives us a picture of God rejoicing over His people, silent in His love, and suddenly breaking in upon the silence of His love with a song of delight. What revelation of the heart of God is more exquisite than this: the picture of God singing for very joy over His people! It is a picture of the motherhood of God.”

FIFTEENTH WEEK. A CALL TO REPENTANCE.

SEVENTH DAY: THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH.

Read the book through and note the following outline; make a brief summary under each section:

- I. Title, 1:1.
- II. The threat of judgment, 1:2-18.
- III. The admonition to repent, 2:1-3:7.
- IV. The promise to the faithful, 3:8-20.

The Message of Zephaniah: This is not a hap-hazard world. God is in the midst of it. He is a jealous God. Because of their sins and their indifference all nations are to be devoured by the fire of His jealousy: He will search the innermost recesses of the nations of the earth, and no land shall escape. Nothing that they possess, no power of their own, will avail in the day of wrath and trouble and distress that is coming. Yet they are invited to turn from their sin and seek Him. In the midst of all their sensuality God sees good in them still; and if they will turn from their evil ways and come back to Him, He will receive them. "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "They shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."

Key thought: A call to repentance.

Key word: Repent.

"Repentance is to leave the sin we loved before
And show that we in earnest grieve by doing so no more."

Key text: 2:3.

PRAYER: "Almighty God, make us perfect in Christ Jesus; out of His fulness may we all receive, and rest in Him forever more. May His passion be our deliverance; His wounds be our healing; His cross our redemption; and His death our life. With His righteousness may we be clothed; by His spirit may we be sanctified; in His blood may we be cleansed; and to His image may we be conformed. Amen."

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SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

FIRST DAY: NAHUM 1:1-6. A GOD OF VENGEANCE.

I. The Title, 1:1. Note the double title: *Burden of Nineveh*, or oracle concerning Nineveh (margin); *Book of the vision of Nahum*.

Ch. 1 is an introduction to the book.

Nothing is known about Nahum. His name means consolation. Even Elkosh, his native place, is uncertain. Capernaum means the "village of Nahum," and may have had something to do with the prophet. See John 7:52, however, "Search and see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

G. A. Smith says Nahum is a supplement to Jonah. "Nahum's book is one great 'at last.'" Cf. vs. 8, 9.

He prophesies against Nineveh, a foreign city, for the benefit of Judah, v. 15.

What use would such a prophecy be to God's people?

He was speaking in Jerusalem.

Date: Nineveh was destroyed in 606 B.C. Thebes fell in 663 B.C. Nahum prophesied between these dates.

II. God is a God of vengeance. Vs. 2-6.

What different descriptions of God's power does the prophet give?

"Let us place ourselves among the people who for so long a time had been thwarted, crushed, and demoralized by the most brutal enemy which was ever suffered to roll its forces across the world, and we shall sympathize with the author, who for the moment will feel nothing about his God save that He is a God of vengeance."

What character does Nahum give to God?

SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

SECOND DAY: NAHUM 1:7-15. ENEMIES WILL BE
PUNISHED.

III. Jehovah will destroy the enemies of His people,
vs. 7-15.

Note the contrast in vs. 7 and 8, what God is to His friends and what He is to His enemies.

To whom is v. 14 addressed? V. 15?

What is the meaning of v. 15?

Read Ps. 1.

PRAYER: "Lord God omnipotent, we know that Thou art a jealous God, and that no man can stand before Thee and continue in unrighteousness, but we praise Thy name that Thou art slow to anger, although Thou wilt by no means clear the guilty, Thou who rebukest the sea and maketh even it a dry land. In tenderness and mercy visit us and save us even from ourselves for Jesus' sake. Amen."

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SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

THIRD DAY: NAHUM 2:1-7. IN GOD'S HANDS AT
LAST.

IV. Nineveh's fall 2:1-3:7.

This is the prophecy proper to which what precedes has been introductory.

"The scene now changes from the presence and awful arsenal of the Almighty to the historical consummation of His vengeance."

The prophet seems to see the siege of Nineveh, and he speaks to the besieged people.

Notice the vividness of the description. Cf. Amos 2:4-11.

They are urged to fortify, v. 1, 2.

V. 3 seems to describe what is going on outside the walls; while v. 4 gives a picture of the inside.

The warriors are dazed, v. 5.

The city is captured, vs. 6, 7.

Nineveh was destroyed by a flood of the Tigris.

Nineveh stands for Assyria, of which it was the capital. She had exacted tribute from all the smaller states of western Asia.

SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

FOURTH DAY: NAHUM 2:8-13. DESTRUCTION.

The siege is over; the prophet speaks to the victors.

What is the meaning of v. 8?

He commands the victors to rob her (v. 9), and they do (v. 10).

The rulers of Nineveh were like lions who killed and destroyed; they and theirs shall be killed and destroyed now, v. 11-13. Cf. 3:1, "the bloody city."

"The world power which exacted tribute from all the smaller states of Western Asia was Assyria, with its capital at Nineveh. Masterful and ruthless she ruled them with a rod of iron. We sometimes speak of the barbarities of modern warfare, and heaven forbid that anyone should seek to make little of its horrors. But modern warfare is kindness itself when compared with the savage cruelties of a Sargon or a Sennacherib. Imagine the fiendish device of flaying men alive! or the inhuman practice of putting out a captive's eyes! or dragging away a batch of exiles with a hook in their nose! 'How deeply seated was their thirst for blood and vengeance on an enemy is exemplified in a bass-relief which represents Assur-bani-pal and his queen feasting in their garden while the head of a conquered Elamite king hangs from a tree above.'"

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SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

FIFTH DAY: NAHUM 3:1-7. THE CAUSE OF IT ALL.

The prophet gives the reasons for Nineveh's downfall.

What reason is assigned in vs. 1-3?

What reason in v. 4?

What is God going to do to her?

How many sins are mentioned here?

"Nineveh vanished from history totally and at once—so that those who passed over its ruins saw the visible proofs of the wrath of God."

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Behold I am against thee*" is ever God's cry to the wicked; their way is rough because He is against them. And yet God is ever calling to the wicked, "Come now and let us reason together." "Let the wicked forsake his way . . . and let him return unto our God . . . for He will abundantly pardon." If men choose the rough way, it is because they will not hear the loving Father's voice.

SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

SIXTH DAY: NAHUM 3:8-19. THE CERTAINTY OF
DESTRUCTION.

This is Part V of the book.

Noamon in v. 8 is Thebes.

Read the marginal explanation of v. 8.

What is meant by Ethiopia, Egypt, Put, and Lubin
in v. 9?

What was the mistake Thebes made?

What happened to Thebes?

State the substance of vs. 10-13.

What is meant by "*Thy people in the midst of thee
are women*"? V. 13.

Nothing will avail, v. 14-17.

What does v. 18 mean?

Why should there be rejoicing at Nineveh's fall?

"The nature of Nahum's message is significant enough. He proclaims with no uncertain sound that no kingdom founded upon brute force can ultimately triumph. It carries within its own structure the secret of its dissolution. It has chosen might instead of right, and violence instead of equity, and it needs no vision of the faculty divine to tell us what shall be the end of such a choice. It shall perish in the flames of its own kindling; and go down to the dust a heap of shapeless mounds."

"His language is strong and brilliant, his rhythm rumbles and rolls, leaps and flashes like the horsemen he describes."

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SIXTEENTH WEEK. "VENGEANCE IS MINE."

SEVENTH DAY: NAHUM CHS. 1, 2, 3.

- I. Title, 1:1.
- II. Jehovah is a God of Vengeance, 1:2-6.
- III. God will destroy the enemies of his people, 1:7-15.
- IV. Nineveh's fall, 2:1-3:7.
 1. The siege and capture of the city, 2:1-13.
 2. The cause of it all, 3:1-7.
- V. The certainty of Nineveh's destruction, 3:8-19.
 1. She is not better than Thebes that was destroyed, 3:8-10.
 2. She shall be destroyed, 11-13.
 3. Nothing will help, 14-17.
 4. None will mourn; all will rejoice, 18, 19.

The Message of Nahum: "Nineveh represents the haughty glory of this world. It recognizes nothing but its own selfish grandeur. So the world hates meekness, scorns control, loves mastery, breathes the spirit of Nimrod rather than the spirit of Christ. With this our God shall deal in terrible judgment. The cities of the nations shall fall; the thrones that have resisted the authority of Christ and His word shall be overturned; the peoples that have made their own glory all their care shall be utterly wasted; the world itself, with the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and pride of life, shall pass away; but they that do the will of God shall abide forever."

Key thought: God's vengeance on man's pride.

Key word: Vengeance.

Key texts: 1:2. Gal. 6:7.

SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL
LIVE BY FAITH.

FIRST DAY: HAB. 1:1-11. GOD IS IN HIS WORLD.

Title 1:1. The Burden, or Oracle, which Habakkuk did see. Cf. 2:2.

His name "means one who comforts and holds up his people, as one embraces a weeping person." Luther.

He has been called "The prophet of Faith." "Other prophets attack the sins; he is the first to state the problems of life."

The tradition is that he was a priest. He may have been a Levite.

Against which nation does he speak?

The date is very uncertain.

Part I. *A dialogue between Jehovah and the prophet:*
"How long shall the wicked be allowed to triumph over the righteous?" chs. 1 and 2.

The prophet speaks in vs. 2-4.

Give a summary of what he says.

What sins does he describe?

In vs. 5 to 11 we have God's answer. Paraphrase these verses.

Jehovah is going to bring the Chaldeans upon them.

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SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL
LIVE BY FAITH.

SECOND DAY: HAB. 1:12-2:1.

The prophet speaks again.
What plea does he make in v. 12?

The pronouns *him* and *he* in vs. 12, 15, 16, 17 refer to the Chaldeans.

Why is the name *Rock* an appropriate one for God?

The Chaldeans in vs. 15-17 are compared to fishermen who rejoice over a successful catch. They may have been used by God to chastise Israel, but they exceeded all bounds. Cf. Isa. 47:6, 7; Zech. 1:14, 15.

On 2:1 read the following:

"The prophet possesses the capacity of recognizing God in history. He feels it when catastrophes are in the air. He stands on his watch-tower and spies out the signs of the times, so as to interpret them to his people, and to point out to them the right way, which will surely guide them out of all danger."

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*He sacrificeth unto his net,*" v. 16. This is indeed an old sin. Man, in his prosperity, forgets God, and worships the earthly means by which he has prospered. "Is not this great Babylon that I have builded?" is the cry to-day over and over again.

SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL
LIVE BY FAITH.

THIRD DAY: HAB. 2:2-19. THE SINS OF THE CHAL-
DEANS.

God answers: "Write the message and make it so plain that a man may read it as he runs, for the time will soon prove it to be true: 'The Chaldeans are proud, they will fall; the righteous man, however much oppressed now, shall live because he is faithful,'" vs. 2-4.

See Paul's use of 2:4 in Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11.

V. 5 describes the haughty Chaldeans and the nations they have destroyed; such nations will some day taunt them about their covetousness (6-8), their selfishness (9-11), their unholy passion for building (12-14), their delight in conquest (15-17), their idolatry (18, 19).

What does he say is the condition of deliverance? Vs. 2-4.

Memorize v. 4.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Wait for it*," v. 3. "A large part of the church's history, and of every believer's experience, is occupied by waiting. The whole of the Old Testament was a waiting for one dispensation. The whole of the New is waiting for another. David speaks of his waiting for God more than twenty-five times." Cf. 3:16.

"They also serve, who only stand and wait."

SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL
LIVE BY FAITH.

FOURTH DAY: HAB. 3:1-7. THE PRAYER AND ITS
ANSWER.

In ch. 3 we have the prophet's prayer in the form of a Psalm.

Many of the Psalms are prayers, *e.g.*, 86, 90.

V. 1 is the title.

Shigionoth, 3:1. The same word is used in the title of Ps. 7. It describes the kind of Psalm or the musical instrument upon which the accompaniment was played. Here it means "an elegy."

At the end of the Psalm is the musical direction so frequent in Psalms.

The prayer is really in v. 2.

What is the substance of it?

Vs. 3-7 describe God's coming in a storm, in response to the prayer. Notice the details:

The word *Selah*, vs. 3, 9, 13. This is a musical term of some kind. It may mean that at the point where it is placed in the Psalm the music is to be louder.

PRAYER: "*O Lord, revive Thy work.* In the midst of selfishness and unholy ambition; in the midst of sin and sorrow; in the midst of trial and temptation; in the midst of our ordinary, every-day life make Thyself known, revive Thy work, O Lord. Amen."

SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL
LIVE BY FAITH.

FIFTH DAY: HAB. 3:8-15. GOD IS COMING TO SAVE
HIS PEOPLE.

Why God came—to save His people. “Thou shalt
call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people.”

Make a summary of these verses.

Notice the following familiar verses in Habakkuk:
2:4; 1:13; 1:5; 2:20; 3:2.

Memorize 2:20.

Referring to the study of the second day of the fifth
week, notice that the Fifth Division of Old Testament
History is *The Chosen Nation Reconstructed as a Jewish
Church*. 1 and 2 Chron., Ezra and Nehemiah.

Who and what were the Chaldeans?

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SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.

SIXTH DAY: HAB. 3:16-19. THE EFFECT OF THE REVELATION ON THE PROPHET.

V. 16. "Fear, excited by the threatenings of God, issues in 'rest' followed by the mercies of God."

Under what circumstances does the prophet say he will rejoice? Vs. 17, 18.

What is it that causes his rejoicing?

Have you ever rejoiced under such circumstances?

PRAYER: "Grant, Almighty God, as the dullness and hardness of our flesh is so great that it is needful for us in various ways to be afflicted—Oh, grant that we patiently bear Thy chastisement, and under a deep feeling of sorrow flee to Thy mercy displayed to us in Christ, so that we may depend not on the earthly blessings of this perishable life, but relying on Thy word go forward in the course of our calling, until at length we be gathered to that blessed rest which is laid up for us in heaven, through Christ our Lord. Amen."—Calvin's Exposition of Habakkuk.

SEVENTEENTH WEEK. THE JUST SHALL
LIVE BY FAITH.

SEVENTH DAY: HAB. CHS. 1, 2, 3.

Read the book through. "Speaking for myself, as a student of world literature, I do not know to what I should turn for specimens of literary perfection rather than to the rhapsodies of Habakkuk and Joel."

The book has been condensed as follows:

Prophet: O Lord! the wickedness of our times, 1:1-4.

God: I will bring the Chaldeans, 1:5-11.

Prophet: O Lord! the desolation of the arrogant Chaldeans, 1:12-2:1.

God: The fivefold woe against Chaldea, 2:2-19.

Prayer: "A choral echo, anthem of praise to the God who comes to judge and save," 3:1-19.

The Message of Habakkuk: "As he brooded over these desolating thoughts, as he looked out on a day of the Lord, which was a day of clouds and thick darkness; the light of truth dawned on the soul of the troubled Levite; and for himself, for his nation, for all time it was granted him to see at least in germ, and to set forth at least in outline the two great truths upon which, as on the great main pillars of a temple, the consolations of this life must rest: 1. God is the Lord. 2. The righteous shall live by faith."

Key thought: The just shall live by faith.

Key word: Faith.

Key text: 2:4.

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EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF COWARDICE."

FIRST DAY: OBADIAH 1-9. EDM'S PUNISHMENT.

I. Title, 1:1a.

What does he mean by *vision*? V. 1.

Who was Obadiah?

Nothing is said about the date.

"This little book has been tossed out of one century into another by successive critics, till there exists in their estimates of its date a difference of nearly 600 years."

He seems to quote Joel 1:15; 3:17; 2:32; Amos 9:12.
About whom does he speak?

To whom is he speaking?

Edom has been called "That bitter brother of Israel."
Why? Cf. v. 10. Gen. 32:3. Numb. 20:21.

II. Destruction of Edom, 1:1b-16.

a. Obadiah foretells her punishment in vs. 1b-9.

"O, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock," v. 3.
"The Biblical World" for November, 1901, contains pictures of these very rocks. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

What does he mean by vs. 5 and 6?

EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF
COWARDICE."

SECOND DAY: OBADIAH 10-14. WHY GOD IS GOING
TO PUNISH EDMOM.

b. Reasons for punishment, 10-14. What are they?

How was Edom Jacob's brother? V. 10.

Of what sin does the prophet accuse them?

Compare Obadiah with Jer. 49:7-22, and notice the similarity.

According to Obadiah, sometimes it is a sin to be neutral: not to do anything when something ought to be done is a sin. It is the sin of the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:15, 16). It is the sin of indifference, which is so common among men to-day. Let us see to it that it is not our sin.

Read Ps. 2.

"The prophecy of Obadiah has always been a special favorite with the Jews. They realize, what indeed is plain, that the prophecy has yet to receive its true fulfillment; and they see in it a typical reference to Rome. To them the Edomites represent Christians, at whose hands in earlier days they suffered so terribly."

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EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF COWARDICE."

THIRD DAY: OBADIAH 15-21. PUNISHMENT AND RESTORATION.

Compare Lam. 4:21, 22.

c. Their punishment, 15-16.

What does he mean by *the day of Jehovah*? Cf. marginal references.

Note the word "drunk" in prophecy. What does it mean? Cf. Isa. 63:6; Jer. 51:57.

III. Promise of Restoration, vs. 17-21.

This ending is frequent in the Minor Prophets. Cf. Amos 9:11 *et seq.*; Joel 3:18 *et seq.*

House of Esau, v. 18. Who is referred to here?

Locate on the map the places referred to in vs. 19-20.

The prophets always rest the truth of what they say on the fact that it is God's word: "*Jehovah hath spoken it*," v. 18.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*The house of Jacob shall possess its possessions.*" Really owning what we have. How many good things we have and yet we do not possess them. So many of the rich gifts which have come to us—liberty, opportunity, the open Bible, the heritage of the past, health—are not fully possessed because we are always wanting something else. Let us possess our possessions and enjoy them.

EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF
COWARDICE."

FOURTH DAY: OBADIAH.

Read the Book of Obadiah through.

Write opposite the following divisions of the book the verses covered by each.

I. Title.

II. Destruction of Edom.

a. Punishment foretold.

b. Reasons for punishment.

c. Their punishment.

III. Promise of Restoration.

Key thought: The curse of cowardice.

Key word: Edom.

Key text: 21.

The Message of Obadiah: "The Spirit of greed and cruelty is forever hateful to Jehovah, and so surely as any nation is actuated thereby in her dealings with other nations, by the Nemesis of God's judgments, so shall she perish sooner or later."

EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF
COWARDICE."

FIFTH DAY: OBADIAH 1-21.

"The kingdom shall be Jehovah's," v. 21.

Who were the Patriarchs?

Familiarize yourself with the following: *Abraham* was called to leave his country and to found a new nation. Read the promise to him, Gen. 12:1.

His two sons were *Isaac* and *Ishmael*.

Isaac's two sons were *Jacob* and *Esau*.

The Twelve Tribes came from *Jacob*: Edom and Moab came from *Esau*.

Make a list of the Twelve Tribes. See Gen. 35:23-26.

Which ones became Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and which became Judah, the Southern Kingdom?

PRAYER: "Lord Jesus, help us to be brave; when Thy cause needs my help may I fearlessly give it. Thou didst bear all things for me: everywhere Thou wert brave, give to me Thy bravery. May I stand up for Thee in the midst of all surroundings, and by my testimony lead others to Thee. Amen."

EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF
COWARDICE."

SIXTH DAY: EZEK. 2:1-8 AND 33:1-9.

In 507 B.C. began the Babylonian captivity, when the elite of Judah were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:10-16). Among these captives was the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:2, 3), who continued for twenty years to speak to his people. At first his theme was the coming destruction of Jerusalem. This fills twenty-four chapters of his book. (Cf. 4:16; 5:12; 6:6; 24:9.)

The people would not hear; Jerusalem was destroyed in 586. Then he began a series of prophecies, filled with promises of restoration (33:11; 36:11; 37:14), closing his book with his great vision of the "New Jerusalem" (chs. 40-48).

Ezekiel's message was fivefold: God's majesty, Israel's apostasy, judgments on the heathen nations, Israel's restoration, and the final consummation of the Kingdom of Peace.

Add any further facts you may have learned about Ezekiel.

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EIGHTEENTH WEEK. "THE CURSE OF COWARDICE."

SEVENTH DAY: Ps. 126, 137. THE EXILE.

One of the greatest events in the history of Israel is the Babylonian exile, when the people of Judah were carried away from Jerusalem by the Babylonians into a strange land. Exile was a means used to subdue rebellious tribes, and had been used in 722 B.C., when the Assyrians transported the Ten Tribes of Israel from Samaria (2 Kings 17:1-6, 20). The result was that they disappeared. So in 596 B.C. the people of Judah were carried away (2 Kings 25:1-12), an event of which the prophets had often spoken and which the people dreaded (Jer. 13:19, 40:3). Its effect upon them is described in the 137th Psalm. The book of Daniel gives an account of some of the captives. After the discipline of the captivity they were restored to their land. Ezra 1; Ps. 126.

Read Jer. 19:5-7 and state what we learn here about the condition of the captives.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "Observe how God punished His ancient people. Look at Judah sitting amid the ruins of Jerusalem; her temple without a worshipper and her streets choked with the dead; look at that bound, weeping, bleeding remnant of a nation, toiling on its way to Babylon, and may I not warn you with the apostle: 'If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He spare not thee?'"

NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

FIRST DAY: HAGGAI 1:1-6. THE REPRIMAND.

This book falls into four addresses. The First Address is ch. 1:1-15. *The Call to Build.*

The first prophet of the Restoration. Read Ezra, chs. 1-3.

Where was Haggai speaking?

Fix the date of the book from 1:1. Cf. Zech. 1:1. For the first time a date is fixed by the reign of a heathen king.

He speaks to the head of the civil as well as the ecclesiastical government.

Notice from Ezra 1 that God had moved Cyrus to permit the Jewish captives to go back to Jerusalem *for the purpose of rebuilding the temple* and a large number returned (2:64-67).

This was in 536 B.C. When Haggai is speaking, it is the second year of Darius, 520 B.C. They had returned to build the temple: sixteen years had elapsed, and still it had not been rebuilt. "At this crisis appeared an aged and venerable man, Haggai, who had seen with his own eyes the old temple and the old Jerusalem, and who must therefore have been in his seventies, with words of warning and exhortation."

Who was the governor of Judah?

What did the people say? V. 2.

What accusation does the prophet bring against them? V. 4.

When had the temple been destroyed? V. 4.

What was the result of neglecting their duty? V. 6.

Memorize v. 6.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: God called them out of captivity to *rebuild His home*; they did not do it and did not prosper. How long ago did He call you out of the captivity of sin? Have you since then been helping to establish His kingdom? That is what He called you for.

NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

SECOND DAY: HAGGAI 1:7-11. THE COMMAND.

What does he mean by consider your ways? V. 7.

What command is given them? V. 8.

What was their condition and what had caused it?
Vs. 9-11.

Make a summary of vs. 4-11.

Someone has said there are seven disappointments in vs. 6-9. What are they?

We can imagine the state of affairs: They had been permitted to return to Jerusalem for the express purpose of rebuilding the temple. They had laid the foundations, and now they were using for their own comfortable houses the material which should have gone into the temple. They have their homes. God's home lies waste.

“Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!”

NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

THIRD DAY: HAGGAI 1:12-15. EFFECT OF THE ADDRESS.

What do they do? Vs. 12, 14.

What is Jehovah's response to their actions? V. 13.

Why did the people obey Haggai's words? V. 12.

What is Haggai called in v. 13?

What is the meaning of the word "spirit" in v. 14?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: It was the voice of God, though the words were Haggai's, v. 12. May our prayer be that men may hear God when we speak; He does speak through men to-day, why not through you?

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NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

FOURTH DAY: HAGGAI 2:1-9. ENCOURAGEMENT.

Second Address. 2:1-9. *Courage.*

How much later than the First Address?

This shows us how long they had been working on the temple.

To whom does he speak?

Why "*remnant of the people*"? V. 2.

What is the meaning of v. 3? Cf. v. 9.

How long ago had the first temple been destroyed?

Notice in v. 4 "be strong," "be strong," "be strong," "and work," "for I am with you."

He promises them that all nations shall contribute to the glory of the new temple, vs. 6, 7.

Why can he do this? V. 8.

How is the new temple to compare with the old? V. 9.

Make a brief summary of this Second Address.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*This house in its former glory . . . the latter glory of this house,*" 3, 9. "Then there are more people who are always lamenting the departed greatness of spiritual power; they cry for another good old-fashioned revival like that under Moody."

NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

FIFTH DAY: HAGGAI 2:10-19. "THE POWER OF THE
UNCLEAN."

This is the Third Address.

How long after the First Address was this one delivered?

They are still building, v. 15.

For the reason of v. 11, read Deut. 17:8, 9.

In Lev. 6:27 it is provided that anything touched by holy flesh shall be holy, so Haggai says: "If holy flesh, by touching a garment, make it holy, will the garment make holy what it touches?" What is the answer?

Why are the Ten Commandments still effective, but not the Levitical law?

What is the substance of v. 13?

Application: Their holy offerings were not contagious: their uncleanness was, v. 14. Sin seems to be contagious, while goodness is not.

What does v. 16 mean?

What was their condition before and after their obedience? Vs. 15-19.

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NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

SIXTH DAY: HAGGAI 2:20-23. I WILL BLESS THEE.

This is the Fourth Address.

Notice each time whose word it is: 1:1; 2:1; 2:10; 2:20. The prophet is only the agent.

When was this address delivered?

To Zerubbabel: one of the ancestors of Jesus. Matt. 1:12.

What does he mean by "*I will shake*"? V. 21.

Write out the substance of this short address.

What is the meaning of "signet"? V. 23. Cf. Authorized Version.

Notice the seven "I wills" of God in Haggai 1:8 (2); 2:6; 2:7, 9; 2:22; 2:23.

NINETEENTH WEEK. ARISE AND BUILD.

SEVENTH DAY: HAGGAI CHS. I, 2. PS. 127.

- I. First Address: The Call to Build, 1:1-15.
- II. Second Address: Courage, 2:1-9.
- III. Third Address: "The Power of the Unclean," 2:10-19.
- IV. Fourth Address: I Will Bless Thee, 2:20-23.

Key thought: Be strong and work.

"Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift.

We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.

Shun not the struggle; face it. 'Tis God's gift."

Key word: Build.

Key text: 1:8.

"Too often men still say, 'The time has not come.' How many people are not doing what they ought because they are waiting for some set time."

A student once went to the president of his university and declared his determination to enter the ministry, when he had finished his course. The reply came, "Why not enter it now?"

The Message of Haggai: The sum of Haggai's four addresses is briefly: "Why do you permit God's home to lie waste, while you beautify your own? Rise up and build! This temple which you now build, small though it may seem now, will rival the former in its beauty. Go on with your work; God punishes you now because of your self-seeking worldliness, but He will bless you. He has chosen you as His peculiar treasure." What a message for this time of selfishness and commercial strife!

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TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

FIRST DAY: ZECH. 1:1-6. REPENT.

Note the absence of the usual title.

Zechariah was a member of the priestly family of Iddo, v. 1, one of the priests who returned to Jerusalem after the captivity. Cf. Neh. 12:4. Here he is called a prophet, in Neh. he is called a priest.

Date: After the return from exile. The eighth month in the second year of Darius, v. 1, was November, 520 B.C. Notice that other dates are given for other parts of the book, 1:7; 7:1.

He was a contemporary of Haggai, cf. 1:1 and Hag. 1:1.

To whom did he speak? Ezra 5:1, 6, 14.

Whether Zechariah wrote all of this book has been much discussed. The discussion arose years ago (1638), when it was noticed that Zech. 11:12, 13 was quoted by Matt. 27:9 as from Jeremiah.

"The conclusion therefore at which it seems not unreasonable to arrive is that, while we hold ourselves open to give candid consideration to any fresh argument that may be adduced, we have not as yet sufficient ground for relinquishing the ancient and tenable belief that the book of Zechariah is throughout the work of the author whose name it bears."

The book falls into three parts: Chs. 1-8, 9-11, and 12-14.

Part I. Visions and Fasts, chs. 1-8.

1. Introduction, 1:1-6.

What is the invitation of v. 3?

What promise is made in v. 3?

What example is set before them?

Use the marginal references for further information.

To what argument does the prophet appeal in vs. 4-6?

TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

SECOND DAY: ZECH. 1:7-17. THE VISION OF THE MESSENGERS.

2. Eight visions, 1:7-6:8.

These were for the encouragement of Zerubbabel and Joshua in rebuilding the temple. They were disappointed that God had not revealed Himself when they returned to Jerusalem, 1:16, 17.

First Vision: Four horsemen.

Notice the date, v. 7, some months later.

What did the prophet see?

What were these horsemen? V. 10.

What report did they bring back? V. 11.

What did they mean by their report?

What was the angel's question in v. 12?

"Three score and ten years," v. 12, refer to what?

What is the Lord's answer?

How would this encourage Zerubbabel and Joshua?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: God is in His world. It seems sometimes as if the spirit of evil was in control, but the messengers of God are going about; He knows what is being done. "The Lord shall yet comfort Zion." Let us not be discouraged.

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TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

THIRD DAY: ZECH. I:18-21. DESTRUCTION OF ENEMIES.

Second Vision: Four horns and four smiths.

Horns, v. 18. The horn was a symbol of honor, Job 16:15, and of power. Jer. 48:25; Amos 6:13.

What four nations are thought to be referred to?

It seems better to take "four horns" to mean enemies on all sides, rather than particular nations.

Who is referred to by the smiths?

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What is intended in the use of the three names in v. 19?

What effect would such a vision have?

Read Ps. 75.

PRAYER: "O Almighty God, the Supreme Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful to those who truly repent, save and deliver us, we humbly beseech Thee, from the hands of our enemies; that we, being armed with Thy defence, may be preserved ever more from all perils, to glorify Thee, who art the only giver of all victory; through the merits of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

FOURTH DAY: ZECH. 2:1-5. THE CITY OF PEACE.

Third Vision: The man with the measuring line.
What does the measuring of Jerusalem mean?

Jerusalem is to have a time when they will not need walls to keep out enemies. What kind of a time would that be?

On "*villages without walls*," see Ezek. 38:11.
Who is to be her protector?

What would be the effect of this vision?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Run speak to this young man*," v. 4. What a message for the members of our Associations! It comes ringing down the ages from the lips of our great Captain. But how laggard we are; how slowly we move; how we hesitate and hold back and make excuse. O men, *run* is the command, *run, speak*—for the young man is waiting to hear and the young man is your brother.

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TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

FIFTH DAY: ZECH. 2:6-13. COME BACK.

This is a lyric piece interrupting the visions; what would you say was its subject?

;

Babylon is to be destroyed, vs. 6-9.

A call to rejoice because God is going to be with them, 10-13.

Note the missionary promise in v. 11. Cf. 9:10; Jonah 4:11; Joel 2:28; 3:2.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye,*" v. 8. It does seem as if God could not find language strong enough to describe the tenderness and love He has for His people. He is as sensitive to His people's conditions as a man is to that most delicate organ of his body—the eye. Can't you endure more heroically when you remember that God feels it too?

TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

SIXTH DAY: ZECH. 3:1-5. THE VISION ITSELF.

Fourth Vision: The high priest and Satan, cf. Job. 1:6. What did the prophet see?

Note that Satan is a person. Cf. Matt. 4:10. What is referred to by "*a brand*" in v. 2? What by "*the fire*"?

Joshua, the high priest, clothed in filthy garments, symbols of sin. Isa. 64:6.

The high priest bore the people's sins. "In such a high priest Christian theology has seen the prototype of Christ."

What command is given in vs. 4, 5?

This is symbolical of the restoration of the priesthood. Religious obstacles were to be taken out of the way.

The putting on of clean garments has always been a type of change from sin to purity. See the stronger figure used by Paul in Rom. 13:14.

TWENTIETH WEEK. VISIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

SEVENTH DAY: ZECH. 3:6-10. THE PROMISE OF A KING.

Fourth Vision (continued):

"To render judgment, in the place of God, was part of the high priest's office," Deut. 17:8-11.

What was the high priest to do? V. 7.

"*Them that stand by*," v. 7, cf. v. 4. The purified Joshua was to have a place among the angels of God and have access to God, cf. Ps. 66:18. Can it be that some of your prayers are not answered because you are not in this condition?

V. 8. "To Joshua and his fellows I foretell the coming of 'my servant, Branch,' because they, the priesthood in all their office and ministry, as well as in what has just happened to them in the vision in the person of their chief, are types of Him."

"My servant" is a frequent name of Messiah in Isaiah. See also Acts 3:13; 4:27, 30, where Servant is a proper name.

This is, of course, a clear prophecy of a coming Messiah.

What is meant by "the stone" in v. 9? Cf. 6:12; 4:7, 9; Eph. 2:20.

What does v. 10 mean?

"We are told in the Talmud that when, on the great day of Atonement, the high priest had performed the various duties of that solemn day, he was escorted home in a festive manner, and was accustomed to give a festal entertainment to his friends. The maidens and youths of the people went forth to their gardens and vineyards with songs and dances; social entertainments took place on all sides and universal gladness closed the festival of that solemn day."

TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

FIRST DAY: ZECH. 4:1-14. NOT BY MIGHT NOR POWER.

Fifth Vision: The Golden Candlestick and the Olive Trees.

What did the prophet see? Vs. 1-5.

Why *seven*?

Connect vs. 3 and 12.

G. A. Smith says of vs. 7-9: "It is one of the greatest sayings of the Old Testament, there is none more spiritual and more comforting."

These were words of encouragement to Zechariah.

Some have supposed that by the two olive trees Zerubabel and Shealtiel were meant. It seems more probable that they merely indicate a generous source of supply. Here, again, care must be taken not to press the imagery of the vision too far.

How would this vision encourage them?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Not by might nor by an army, but by my spirit.*" If we could only learn that this is God's way! We seek to conquer by an army. How quietly all the mighty processes of nature work. Cf. 1 Kings 19:11, 12.

Memorize Zech. 4:6, last clause.

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TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

SECOND DAY: ZECH. 5:1-4. THE CURSE OF GOD.

Sixth Vision: The flying roll.

What did the prophet see? Vs. 1, 2.

What would it look like to him?

How large was the roll in feet and inches?

The roll symbolizes the curse of God going over the earth. Notice that only the wicked are hurt by it, vs. 3, 4.

“Be sure your sin will find you out.”

How would this encourage Zerubbabel?

TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

THIRD DAY: ZECH. 5:5-11. WICKEDNESS.

Seventh Vision: The woman in a barrel.
Describe in your own words what the prophet saw.

Ephah, v. 6; cf. Amos 8:5; Lev. 19:36.
Talent of lead, v. 7. Marg. *round piece*.
The woman is said to be a personification of wickedness.
Wickedness is carried out of the land.
Why "*to the land of Shinar*"? V. 11.

"*In her own place*," v. 11. There is a place for the wicked.

What encouragement would Zerubbabel get out of this vision?

PRAYER: "Our blessed Lord, we thank Thee that Thou hast prepared a place for those who love and serve Thee. We know that every one shall go to his own place; grant, we beseech Thee, that our place may be with Thee forever. Amen."

TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

FOURTH DAY: ZECH. 6:1-8. MESSENGERS OF WRATH.

Eighth Vision: The chariots of the Four Winds.

What did the prophet see?

The imagery of this vision must not be too closely pressed. The interpreting angel gives a very general interpretation of the vision. "It apparently signifies the swift and mighty engines of destruction (four in number, like 'the winds of heaven'), which fall with twofold vengeance (v. 6) on Babylon, the latest enemy of Israel, while they execute wrath also upon Egypt, her earlier oppressor, and thus cause that 'shaking of all nations,' which was the promised precursor of good." Hag. 2:7.

"As the series of visions opened with one of the universal providence of God, so they close with another of the same. The first vision had postponed God's overthrow of the nations till His own time, and this the last vision now describes as begun, the religious and moral needs of Israel having been meanwhile met by the visions which came between, and every obstacle of God's action for the deliverance of His people being removed."

TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

FIFTH DAY: ZECH. 6:9-15. JOSHUA CROWNED.

3. Result of the visions. 6:9-15.

God having spoken by visions now speaks by a symbolic action, cf. Heb. 1:1.

They are to take the gifts which have been sent home by the Jews in captivity, v. 10.

The high priest Joshua is to be crowned, v. 11.

What is the meaning of vs. 12, 13?

The missionary promise, v. 15.

“Jesus shall reign where’er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run.”

“The visions have revealed the removal of the guilt of the land, the restoration of Israel to their standing before God, the revival of the great national institutions and God’s will to destroy the heathen forces of the world. With the temple built, Israel should be again in the position which she enjoyed before the exile. Zechariah, therefore, proceeds to exhort his people to put away the fasts which the exile had made necessary and address themselves as of old to the virtues and duties of the civic life and he introduces his orations to this end by a natural appeal to the experiences of the former days.”

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: For him who is willing to see God gives many visions of encouragement to-day. Look at the wonderful growth of Christianity, out of that little land of Judah into all nations of the earth; look at Jesus the supreme person in the world to-day, and take courage.

“The morning light is breaking,
The darkness disappears.”

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TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

SIXTH DAY: ZECH. 1:7-6:8.

Examine again the following verses and state the purpose of the visions: 1:16, 21; 2:4; 3:10; 4:9; 5:4; 5:11; 6:8.

What was each vision?

1st:

2d:

3d:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

What message for to-day comes to you from these visions?

TWENTY-FIRST WEEK. GOD REIGNS.

SEVENTH DAY: PS. 139:1-12.

There were three outside nations which played an important part in Israel's history: In the north was *Assyria* with Nineveh, its great city. Consult the map and locate this country. Another was *Babylonia* in the south, with Babylon as its capital. Then there was *Syria*, with Damascus as its leading city. Syria included the country known as Palestine. These nations are often spoken of by the names of their great cities. Cf. Nahum. 1:1, Amos 5:5, Zech. 6:10. Fix the relative positions of these countries in your mind. After studying the map, draw one here.

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TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH JEHOVAH."

FIRST DAY: ZECH. 7:1-7. OBEDIENCE BETTER THAN
FASTING.

4. The Deputation from Bethel. Chs. 7 and 8.
How long after the visions was this? 1:7 and 7:1.

Where was Bethel?

To what place did they come?

Bethel was one of the cities to which the captives had
returned from Babylon. Ezra 2:1, 28.

a. The question, 7:1-4.

b. The answer, 7:5-8:23.

The question was whether they, now that the captivity
is over, ought to observe a national fast which had
been instituted during the captivity, "*So many years,*"
v. 4. "*Even these seventy years,*" v. 5.

To the prophets, v. 3. Haggai and Zachariah. Cf.
Hag. 2:11.

The answer of the prophet:

1. Obedience is better than fasts, 5-7. "Let them
drop their fasts and practise the virtues, the neglect of
which had made their fasts a necessity."

Do you ever hear such questions as those in vs. 5
and 6?

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH
JEHOVAH."

SECOND DAY: ZECH. 7:8-14. MERCY, NOT SACRIFICE.

The answer of the prophet (continued):

2. God wants justice and mercy, not sacrifice.

Each time it is "the word of the Lord" that comes to the prophet (7:1, 8; 8:1, 18). He doesn't try to tell them merely what he thinks.

What hint do we have in v. 12 of the way God spoke through the prophet?

"Speak to me by name, O Master,
Let me know it is for me.
Speak, that I may follow faster
With a step more firm and free
Where the shepherd leads his flock
In the shadow of the rock."

Memorize 7:9.

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH
JEHOVAH."

THIRD DAY: ZECH. 8:1-8. THE PEACE OF GOD.

The answer of the prophet (continued):

3. The glorious time coming when God shall be their God, vs. 1-8.

Notice the "Thus saith Jehovah," vs. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7.

What does God say in each instance?

V. 1.

3.

4.

6.

7.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY, vs. 4, 5: "But what an oracle for these times of ours! Whether in the large cities of the old world, where so few of the workers may hope for a quiet old age, sitting in the sun, and the children's days of play are shortened by premature toil and knowledge of evil; or in the newest fringes of the new world, where men's hardness and coarseness are, in the struggle for gold, unawed by reverence for age and unsoftened by the fellowship of childhood—Zachariah's great promise is equally needed. Even there shall it be fulfilled if men will remember his conditions—that the first regard of a community, however straightened its means, be the provision of religion, that truth and whole-hearted justice abound in the gates, with love and loyalty in every heart toward every other."

Memorize 8:5.

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH
JEHOVAH."

FOURTH DAY: ZECH. 8:9-17. THE PAST AND THE
PRESENT.

The answer of the prophet (continued):
What does God say in each paragraph?
V. 9.

V. 14.

What are the things that God hates? V. 17. Does
He still hate them?

Note in ch. 8 ten short oracles, each introduced by
the words "Thus saith Jehovah": 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 14,
19, 20, 23.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "For ourselves the chief
profit of these beautiful oracles is their lesson that the
remedy for the sordid tempers and cruel hatreds en-
gendered by the fierce struggle for existence is found
in civil and religious hopes, in a noble ideal for the
national life, and in the assurance that God's love is at
the back of all, with nothing impossible to it."

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TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH JEHOVAH."

FIFTH DAY: ZECH. 8:18-23. SORROW TURNED TO JOY.

The answer of the prophet (continued):

4. All fasts shall become feasts of joy.

The question of 7:3 is now answered.

What is the meaning of vs. 20, 21?

V. 22. Here is the missionary promise again. What is it?

Read Ps. 122.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: *We have heard that God is with you.* When Mr. Moody was on the Spree, while she was thought to be sinking, it is said that all kinds of people, believers and unbelievers, came to ask him to pray. They had heard that God was with him. O, that more of us could lead such lives that our fellows would know that God was with us. Would that our national life were such that the whole world might know that God is with us as a people.

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH
JEHOVAH."

SIXTH DAY: ZECH. 7:1-8:23. THE MISTAKES OF THE
PAST AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE FUTURE.

What was the question the people asked? 7:3.

The answer was in four parts; give the substance
of each part.

1.

2.

3.

4.

PRAYER: "Dear Father, here I am, where Thou hast placed me. Thou dost know the plans for me which are in Thy mind. Teach me that I may know them. Give me grace that I may accomplish them. Make me strong that I may fill them as Thou dost will. I am not here for my own purposes, for Thou God has sent me into the world. Inspire me, O Holy Spirit, that I may embody Thine own self. Mould me, O Creator of us all, that I may take on immortality in the likeness of Jesus Christ. Amen."

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK. "THUS SAITH
JEHOVAH."

SEVENTH DAY: ZECH. CHS. 1-8.

Review the book to this point. Verify the following outline:

Part I. Visions and Fasts, chs. 1-8.

1. Introduction, 1:1-6.
2. Eight visions, 1:7-6:8.
 - 1st. Four horsemen, 1:7-17.
 - 2d. Four horns and four smiths, 1:18-21.
 - 3d. The man with the measuring line, 2:1-5.
(An interruption, 2:6-13.)
 - 4th. The high priest and Satan, 3:1-10.
 - 5th. The Golden Candlestick and Olive Trees,
4:1-14.
 - 6th. The flying roll, 5:1-4.
 - 7th. The woman in a barrel, 5:5-11.
 - 8th. The chariots of the Four Winds, 6:1-8.
3. Result of the visions, 6:9-15.
4. The Deputation from Bethel, 7:1-8:23.
 - a. The question, 7:1-4.
 - b. The answer, 7:5-8:23.
 1. Obedience better than fasts, 7:5-7.
 2. Justice, not sacrifice, 7:8-14.
 3. Glorious times coming, 8:1-17.
 4. Fasts shall be feasts of joy, 8:18-23.

What message has come to you from your study of the book of Zechariah thus far?

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

FIRST DAY: ZECH. 9:1-8. PUNISHMENT OF ISRAEL'S ENEMIES.

Part II. The First Burden of the Word of the Lord:
The coming of the King, chs. 9-11.

"The hope of a mother for her first born, the pride of a father in his son, the devotion of a slave to his liberator, the eagerness of the woman for her lover, the enthusiasm of soldiers for their captain—unite all these noblest affections of the human heart and you yet shall fail to reach the passion and the glory with which prophecy looked for the King to come."

There is an abrupt and decided change at this point in the book.

The word burden is usually used of a prophecy of judgment. The sentence hung down as a heavy weight, not only upon the heart of the prophet, but upon the people to whom he spoke.

As you read the remainder of the book notice how rich it is in Messianic prophecies.

Hadrach, v. 1. This word caused much speculation for a time as to whether it was the name of a king or not. It has now been settled, as many other important questions are being settled, by discovering the word in an Assyrian inscription as the name of a city near Nineveh.

The places mentioned were enemies of Israel.

On vs. 3, 4. See Luke 12:16-21.

What is the meaning of v. 7?

Read Ps. 91.

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

SECOND DAY: ZECH. 9:9-17. THE COMING OF THE KING.

What is the prophecy of v. 9?

When was it fulfilled?

What attributes of the King are mentioned here?

What attribute is referred to in v. 10?

Was the section of country referred to in v. 10 very large?

What is the meaning of v. 10?

Covenant, v. 11. See Ex. 24:5-8; Matt. 26:28.

The Pit, v. 11. This was a common name for dungeons, which sometimes were old wells, Jer. 37:16.

Victory is coming to Judah, vs. 13-17.

What particulars in these verses show a time of peace and prosperity coming?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece.*" "How true it is that Zion must be against Greece. The one stood for religion and the beauty of holiness; the other for culture and the love of beauty. The one was sensitive to the moral purity of God, and therefore to the moral sanctions of life; the other was sensitive to æsthetic beauty, and therefore to the natural glory of life. Hebraism adored and glorified God: Hellenism deified the world and glorified man."

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

THIRD DAY: ZECH. 10:1-12. JUDAH'S SUPREMACY.

Latter rain, v. 1. This was the rain that fell in the spring and helped the growing grain. The blessing of rain was often a symbol of the blessing of God upon His people. Ps. 65:9, 10. So here, cf. 14:17.

Teraphim, v. 2. What was this? Cf. 1 Sam. 19:13; Gen. 31:19; Ezek. 21:21; Hos. 3:4.

What is the contrast between vs. 1 and 2?

Shepherds, he-goats, v. 3, are names for the rulers and principal men.

What is the substance of vs. 3-5?

Corner-stone, v. 4. Unless God supplies the foundation the house will not stand, Eph. 2:20.

What promise is in vs. 6-12?

Note how the Jews have been sown among the people, v. 9.

"The people are warned to seek their blessing from Jehovah, and not from teraphim and diviners, whom their false shepherds follow. Jehovah, visiting His flock, shall punish these, give proper rulers, make the people strong, and gather in their exiles to fill Gilead and Lebanon."

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

FOURTH DAY: ZECH. 11:1-6. FEED THE FLOCK.

Lebanon, v. 1. Lebanon stood between Israel and her enemies as a bulwark. Her gates had to be opened, figuratively, to let the invaders through.

Vs. 1-4 are poetical, yet there is a literal meaning as well. It is the fire of an invading army; the storm breaking upon the shepherds and their sheep.

God speaks to the prophet, vs. 4-6.

Flock of slaughter, v. 4. The flocks exposed to slaughter.

Who are the sheep?

Vs. 4-6. "To me Jehovah gave an important commission. 'Be a true shepherd,' he commanded, 'to my poor sheep,' so abused by those who have ruled over them. Their foreign masters have treated them as brute beasts without remorse or mercy, exulting in their value as property."

Read Ps. 23.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Feed the flock*," v. 4. Feed my sheep, John 21:16, 17. It is a far cry from one of these commands to the other, but God changes not. As he spoke to His prophets and to His disciples, so he speaks to us to-day. "Let him that is taught, communicate," Gal. 6:6, is still the word of God to us. What are you doing to obey it? Are you feeding the flock?

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

FIFTH DAY: ZECH. 11:7-14. THE PROPHET'S FAILURE.

The command had been obeyed, v. 7. Have you obeyed it?

The allegory here has been called a "Summary of the history of Israel." Is this a good name for it?

Instead of taking one staff of office as a shepherd, he takes two. He names one *Beauty* or *Grace* to signify that part of his work should be to show the people God's graciousness; the other he calls *Bands*, signifying especially the union of the people.

What does v. 8 mean?

But it is no use; he has to let them go, vs. 9, 10.

His work is done; he asks for his wages, v. 12.

And what do they give him? The miserly price of a slave, v. 12. He casts it away to show that they have rejected not him, but Jehovah, and breaks his other staff.

"The spiritual principles which underlie this allegory are obvious. God's own sheep, persecuted and helpless tho' they be, are yet obstinate, and their obstinacy not only renders God's goodwill to them futile, but causes the death of the one man who could have done them good. The guilty sacrifice the innocent, but in this execute their own doom. This is a summary of the history of Israel."

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

SIXTH DAY: ZECH. II :15-17. JEHOVAH'S PUNISHMENT.

Foolish Shepherd, v. 15. They had rejected the Good Shepherd: a different kind should be provided.

Note in v. 16, why the shepherd is foolish; the things he does *not* do.

The priests during the days of the Reformation were often called shepherds, who, instead of feeding the sheep, fed on the sheep.

Cf. Jude 12, where those who lead others astray are called shepherds.

What is to happen to the foolish shepherd?

Read John 10.

PRAYER: "Lord Jesus, Thou great shepherd of the sheep, I am the sheep that has gone astray; seek me out and bring me again to Thy fold. May I dwell in Thy house all the days of my life and praise Thee forever and ever with them that are there. Amen."

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK. THE KING OF PEACE.

SEVENTH DAY: ZECH. CHS. 9, 10, 11. THE COMING KING.

Part II. The Burden of the Word of the Lord, chs. 9-11, (continued).

Fill out the following outline:

9:1-8.

9-17.

10:1-12.

11:1-3.

4-6.

7-14.

15-17.

Study the Messianic prophecies:

The coming King, 9:9; Matt. 21:4, 5.

The thirty pieces of silver, 11:12, 13; Matt. 26:15;

27:9, 10.

Him whom they have pierced, 12:10; John 19:37.

Smite the shepherd, 13:7; Matt. 26:31.

They restore the temple, 6:13.

My servant the Branch, 3:8, 6:12.

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TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

FIRST DAY: ZECH. 12:1-9. JEHOVAH'S PROTECTION OF HIS PEOPLE.

Part III. The Second Burden of the Word of the Lord: The great deliverance and the better age, chs. 12, 13, 14.

What attributes are ascribed to God in v. 1?

Cup of reeling, v. 2. "Jerusalem stands forth like some vast bowl or basin, round which all nations gather, eager to swallow down its inviting contents. But the draught proves to be far other than they anticipated, and they reel and stagger back from it, confused and discomfited."

Burdensome stone, v. 3. Too heavy for anyone to lift.

What is the meaning of vs. 2, 3?

What promise is in vs. 4, 5?

Paraphrase v. 6.

One of the results of the deliverance is found in v. 8. What was it to be?

Another result is in v. 9. What was it?

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

SECOND DAY: ZECH. 12:10-14. PENITENCE FOR SIN.

This is one more result of the deliverance, a repentant people.

How were they to manifest their penitence?

Did you ever manifest yours in this way?

See Luke 22:61, 62.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,*" v. 10. Yes, the day is coming when we must look upon Him. "We shall know Him by the print of the nails." Whether we shall look upon Him in terror or with joy we are now deciding. What is your decision?

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

THIRD DAY: ZECH. 13:1-9. PURIFICATION FROM GUILT.

A great promise of an open fountain in which the people might be cleansed. Cf. John 1:29; Isa. 1:18; Ps. 51:2, 7.

Hairy mantle, v. 4. The prophet's usual garb, 2 Kings 1:8; Matt. 3:4.

When was this promise fulfilled? I John 1:7; Heb. 9:13, 14.

Idols are to be destroyed, v. 2.

There shall be no rival of the true God. How is it with you, have the idols been destroyed?

There is to be no need of prophets, so prophecy is to be abolished, vs. 2-6.

Vs. 3-6 have been paraphrased: "Since the prophets as a class have become mere mercenary, untruthful professionals, whose nearest relatives feel compelled to silence or slay them, they are no longer worth maintaining. So completely will they be under the ban that they shall cease to boast of their visions and to wear rough cloaks of skin, like Elijah, and will instead claim that they are farmers. When one of these is asked concerning his wounded hands, he will reply evasively: 'I received these wounds from my friends!'"

What is God going to do to them? Vs. 7-9.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*I will refine them as silver is refined*," v. 9. "More and more it comes to me, that as in the Father's house above there are many rooms, so in His school below there are many benches. No two of us are taught alike. Just why you should have been and are being led—just why you should have such hard lessons to learn no one knows but God; but He knows—and that is worth everything to a child."

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

FOURTH DAY: ZECH. 14:1-11. JUDGMENT OF THE HEATHEN.

A day of the Lord is coming, v. 1.
What is the substance of v. 2?

God shall fight for Jerusalem, v. 3.

Try to realize the beauty of vs. 6-8.

No need of a distinction between day and night.

Living waters shall flow out in winter and summer.

Cf. Ps. 126:4. "*As streams in the south.*" They never freeze.

Prosperity in the land, vs. 9-11. What are the characteristics of the period?

Ps. 24:1-6.

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

FIFTH DAY: ZECH. 14:12-21.

Hostile nations to be destroyed, vs. 12-15.

Notice the vividness of v. 12.

What is to be the effect upon the nations that are left?
Cf. Rev. 7:9.

Feast of Tabernacles, v. 16. "It was the last and greatest festival of the Jewish year, gathering up into itself, as it were, the year's worship, and at the same time typifying the ingathering of all nations into the Church of God."

What is there in this section that makes it a missionary promise?

Everything is to be holy unto the Lord, v. 20. Cf. Rev. 21:27.

Read Ps. 84.

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

SIXTH DAY: ZECH. CHS. 12, 13, 14. THE MESSIANIC PROMISES IN ZECHARIAH AND THEIR FULFILMENT.

Gather up these promises once more and notice in the New Testament their fulfilment.

Read again the Messianic promises we have had up to this point. Mic. 5:2, 3; Amos 9:11; Mic. 4:1-7 *et al.*

PRAYER: "We long for Thy coming, dear Lord; Thy servants wait patiently for the glad day when Thou shalt summon us to meet Thee. Grant that we may so live day by day that whether Thy coming be at even, or at midnight, or at cock crowing, or in the morning, we shall be waiting for Thee, watching for Thee, ready to go with Thee. Amen."

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

SEVENTH DAY: DEUT. 32:7-35.

Make an outline of the book of Zechariah based on the prior studies.

Part I.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Part II.

Part III.

Key thought: The Supremacy of God.

Key word: Jealous.

Key text: 8:2.

The Message of Zechariah: "His message was exclusively that of *the absolute enthronement of Jehovah*. He gives them the picture of Jehovah watching; of Jehovah acting; and of Jehovah blessing in spite of all their failure. . . . It is the picture of God acting, as well as watching, and the picture necessarily, therefore, of God's blessing. . . . God is on His throne, watching, acting, and He will bless, but men will only come into possession of the blessing and realization of it as they get back to Him and fulfil His purpose."

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

FIRST DAY: MAL. 1:1-5. GOD'S LOVE.

I. Title, 1:1.

Some have thought the book to be anonymous. Malachi means "My messenger"; it may not be a proper name.

To whom does he speak? Who was Edom? Cf. Obadiah 1-4.

Date: The book is not dated. That it was after the captivity is shown by the fact of temple service, 1:7; 2:13, and the absence of idolatry. The temple was finally completed in 516 B.C.

"The situation in Judah at the time when Malachi prophesied was one of depression and discontent. The expectation which earlier prophets had aroused had not been fulfilled; the restoration from Babylon had brought with it none of the ideal glories promised by Isaiah; bad harvest increased the disappointment: hence many among the people began to doubt the Divine justice; Jehovah, they argued, could no longer be the Holy God, for He was heedless of His people's necessity, and permitted sin to continue unpunished; to what purpose, therefore, should they concern themselves with His service?"

"The essential principles of the religion of Israel which had been shaken or obscured by the delinquency of the people during the half century after the rebuilding of the Temple were three: the distinctive Love of Jehovah for His people, His Holiness and His Righteousness; the Book of Malachi takes up each of these in turn and proves or enforces it according as the people have formerly doubted it or in their carelessness done it despite."

II. Introduction, 1:2-5. God's love of Jacob contrasted with His hatred of Esau. Rom. 9:13.

"*I have loved you,*" v. 1. This was God's attitude toward them.

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

SECOND DAY: MAL. 1:6-14. PRIESTS' SINS.

"Taking his stand on the unchanging love of God (1:2) he entreats, rebukes and warns the entire community with respect to three great evils which had marred the spirituality of their ideals: polluted worship, broken marriage vows, unbelief."

III. Sins of the Priests and their punishment, 1:6-2:9.

Note the construction of Malachi's paragraphs: 1. The truth stated. 2. The objection. 3. The answer. 1:2; 1:6; 2:17 *et al.*

What sins are mentioned in vs. 6, 7, and 8?

They offer to God what they would not offer to a superior on earth. Isn't this true of many of us to-day?

V. 9. "If you don't believe it try to perform your function as priests."

"Better a temple closed than a temple profaned," v. 10.

One of the great evils was the slovenly worship. Cf. 1:6, 7, 8, 13.

V. 11. "Never have we had in prophecy, even the most far seeing and evangelical, a statement so far seeing and generous as this." What was the statement?

What further sins are mentioned?

What is the meaning of v. 14?

Are you in danger of this curse?

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

THIRD DAY: MAL. 2:1-9. PUNISHMENT.

What did God require of the priests? V. 2.

What was to be their punishment?

What was "*the covenant with Levi*"? V. 4. Cf. margin.

Why does he refer to Levi in speaking of the priests?

Notice in v. 7 a description of what we should be.
2 Cor. 5:20.

What had the priests really done? V. 8.

What further sin is specified in v. 9?

"This, then, is something of the situation that confronted the author of Malachi: A priesthood lazy and corrupt, neglecting to instruct the people in religion, and offering imperfect sacrifices in the temple; many of the leaders, including doubtless the priests themselves, united in marriage to the wealthy people of the land, to accomplish which they had resorted to divorce; and the mass of the people so far sunk in despair that they had almost ceased to believe that God cared for them, or that they had any duty to perform toward Him."

Prayer: (Write out a prayer based on some lesson from this paragraph.)

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

FOURTH DAY: MAL. 2:10-17. "THE CRUELTY OF
DIVORCE."

IV. Sins of the people, 2:10-3:6. "Like priest, like
people."

Although brothers they had deceived each other, v.
10. Cf. Ex. 19:4-6.

What sins are referred to vs. 11, 13? Neh. 13:23-27.

God will punish such sin, v. 12.

Vs. 14-16. What warnings are given here?

What evil does God hate according to v. 16?

V. 17. "Jehovah is tired of hearing you complain
that He shows especial favor to evil-doers, and that he
never punishes vice nor rewards virtue."

Note their continual questions. *Wherein?* 1:2, 6, 7;
3:7, 8, 13.

"It is a picture of a people who imagine they are
all right, when they are all wrong."

Notice through the book how Malachi insists on com-
pliance with the demands of the law as one of the con-
ditions on which God's blessing may be expected: 1:14;
2:8; 3:7; 4:4. Contrast this with the New Testament
teaching. Eph. 2:8, 9.

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

FIFTH DAY: MAL. 3:1-6. SOME DAY IT WILL COME
RIGHT.

A messenger is to prepare the way, then the Lord will come. See marginal references.

What is His coming to be like?

Fullers' soap, used to purify and whiten the goods.

Priests are to be purified, v. 3. Cf. 1:6-14.

God will be a source of joy to the righteous, v. 4, but a punishment to the wicked, v. 5.

The sins of v. 5 were the prevailing Oriental sins.

What reason is given for this condition in v. 6?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "The message of Malachi was a tract for his times, but it is equally inspiring for the humble Christian of to-day, whose outlook on life is circumscribed and despondent, over whom others win advantage, who is led to question the value of honor, devotion, and probity. Let him fix his gaze, not upon himself nor upon the world around, but upon the all-wise, ever-loving, just, and gracious Father."

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

SIXTH DAY: MAL. 3:7-15. ROBBING GOD.

V. Warnings, 3:7-4:3.

Note again the peculiar constructions of the paragraph. See study for second day.

Rebuke as to offerings.

To whom is God speaking in v. 7?

God asks them to return to Him. They reply, how can we return? By paying the tithe. Withholding the tithe showed unbelief. By paying it they would show that they trusted Him.

How is it true that by not giving tithes they robbed God? Neh. 13:10-12.

How were they to get blessings?

What were the blessings to be?

Memorize v. 10.

Could we be blessed in the same way now?

Florence Nightingale once said the secret of her success was that she never refused God anything.

The old complaint, the wicked prosper, God's service is a vain service. Isn't this the complaint nowadays?

Read Ps. 37:1-11.

Vs. 13-15. "What good do we gain by being faithful to God? What is the use, after all, of our service, our prayer, our lamentation? It is the proud who are happy, and the wicked who are built up." See Job 3.

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK. UNCONSCIOUS
CORRUPTION.

SEVENTH DAY: MAL. 3:16-4:6. GOD'S RIGHTEOUS
JUDGMENT.

"The apocalypse of this last judgment is one of the grandest in all scripture. To the wicked it shall be a terrible fire, root and branch shall they be burned out, but to the righteous a fair morning of God.

Over against their complaint God speaks. What is meant by "*a book of remembrance*"?

How did those who believed in God increase their faith? V. 16.

"The importance of such a little band of Puritans in the midst of a godless nation ought not to be overlooked."

What is the promise of vs. 17, 18?

What is to happen to the wicked?

What to the righteous?

VI. Conclusion, 4:4-6.

Remember the law, Moses. Why?

Look for Elijah, v. 5.

These two appeared at the transfiguration.

The final promise, v. 6. What was it?

Go over the studies for the week and make an outline of the book.

"Malachi is like a late evening which brings a long day to a close, but he is also like a morning dawn which brings with it the promise of a new and more glorious day."

Key thought: Infidelity of returned captives.

Key word: Robbery.

Key text: 3:8.

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TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND DELIVERANCE.

FIRST DAY: JOEL 1:1-7. IT IS A TIME TO WEEP.

Title, 1:1.

We know nothing about Joel except what we get from his book.

“Receiving, as it does, no weight from the personality of the prophet, it may tell the more forcibly, and shine the more brightly through the inherent force and clearness of its own truth.”

What inferences may be drawn about his home from 2:1, 15, 23, 32; 3:1, 6, 8.

Where did he live? 1:13, 14.

The date of the book is very uncertain. Most scholars agree on a late date. G. A. Smith says 444 B.C.

Against which nation did he speak?

Part I. The scourge of locusts and deliverance from them, 1:2-2:27. Help in temporal disaster.

1. Lamentation over destruction by locusts, 1:2-14. To what class does Joel speak in v. 2?

The awfulness of the plague is shown by vs. 2, 3, and 4, cf. 2:4-11.

What class is addressed in v. 5?

Vs. 6 and 7 describe the way in which locusts or grasshoppers have overrun the land.

TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND
DELIVERANCE.

SECOND DAY : JOEL I :8-14. SORROW AND LAMENTATION.

Who is addressed in vs. 8-10?

Why "*girded with sackcloth*"? V. 8.

What have the locusts destroyed? Vs. 8-10.

In vs. 11-12 what class is called upon?

Note in all these cases the completeness of the destruction.

In vs. 13, 14 still another class is called upon ; who are they?

What are they urged to do? V. 14.

What classes of the people has He called upon so far?

What words in vs. 2-14 show the completeness of the destruction?

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TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND DELIVERANCE.

THIRD DAY: JOEL 1:15-20. THE DROUGHT.

2. The drought, 1:15-20.

Vs. 2-14 have been summarized: "Terrible times; everything destroyed; mourn ye drunkards, there is no more wine; mourn all people, your land is destroyed; mourn ye priests, your occupation is gone; let all classes turn to God in this their day of trouble."

What different expressions does the prophet use to describe the drought?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*The water brooks are dried up.*" It seems oftentimes as if this would have to be our cry, everything is so dry spiritually. It seems as if the rivers of God have dried up. But there is help in such times of need—as there surely will be such times—and that help comes alone from God. In answer to our cry, as in answer to Joel's, He will send a fountain from the house of Jehovah, 3:18. Those who are strangers to God may be like a desolate wilderness, but for God's own people "the brooks of Judah shall flow with water."

TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND
DELIVERANCE.

FOURTH DAY: JOEL 2:1-11. COME AND PRAY.

3. Summons to prayer and fasting, 2:1-20.

The prophet summons them to prayer and fasting for the removal of the scourge.

Dr. Morgan calls this first trumpet "The trumpet of alarm; and the second trumpet, in v. 15, "The trumpet of repentance."

What is the meaning of v. 2?

Read carefully the wonderful description of the coming of the locusts in vs. 4-11, cf. Ex. 10:12.

"Summoning all the people I could collect, we went out to meet and attack them [locusts], hoping to stop their progress altogether, or, at least, to turn aside the line of their march. . . . But their number was astounding; the whole face of the mountain was black with them. On they came like a living deluge. We dug trenches and kindled fires and beat and burned to death 'heaps and heaps,' but the effort was utterly useless." They destroyed every green leaf. "I saw large fig orchards 'clean bare,' not a leaf remaining; and as the bark of the fig tree is of a silvery whiteness, the whole orchards, thus rifled of their green veils, spread abroad their branches 'made white,' in melancholy nakedness to the burning sun."—Land and the Book.

What would be the condition of the people after such a visitation?

This is symbolical of the destruction God will bring upon the wicked.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*The day of the Lord,*" v. 2. "This is, as never before, the day of MAN. Progress, invention, culture, are helping to make man imagine that he can do without God, and there is a tendency everywhere to deify human reason and human ability. The results are disastrous to all that is highest and best in human possibility. When these facts overwhelm us our hope is in the assurance that the day of the Lord is now present and yet in all its majesty is yet to come."

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TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND DELIVERANCE.

FIFTH DAY: JOEL 2:12-20. GOD MAY HEAR EVEN YET.

What is the meaning of vs. 12-14?

"Rend your hearts and not your garments," v. 13, calls for what kind of religion?

Memorize v. 13.

What is implied as to their worship heretofore?

He calls them to prayer, v. 15.

How extensive is the call? V. 16.

What prayer are they to make?

In answer to their prayer Jehovah promises to remove the locusts—they are called the "northern army."

Notice the two things necessary: heart service and a realization of God's goodness.

When the prodigal decided to go home (Luke 15), which moved him most, the misery he was in or the thought of a loving father waiting to receive him?

PRAYER: "My transgressions, O Lord, are multiplied, and I am not worthy to behold and see the height of heaven for the multitude of my iniquities. I have provoked Thy wrath, and done evil before Thee: I did not Thy will, neither kept I Thy commandments. Now, therefore, I bow the knee of mine heart, beseeching Thee of grace. I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned, and I acknowledge mine iniquities: wherefore I humbly beseech Thee, forgive me, O Lord, forgive me, and destroy me not with mine iniquities. Amen."

TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND
DELIVERANCE.

SIXTH DAY: JOEL 2:21-27. PROMISE OF RAIN.

4. The promise of rain, 2:21-27.
What is the promise of vs. 21-23?

What is meant by "*former rain*," "*latter rain*"?

Why was this done? V. 27.

Summary: Scourge of locusts; great drought; prayer;
promise of removal of locusts; promise of abundant rain.
Notice that so far it has been only temporal relief.

V. 25 was written on the walls of a rescue mission in
New York. Comp. 1:4 and tell why it was appropriate.

Read Ps. 27:1-6.

TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK. PUNISHMENT AND
DELIVERANCE.

SEVENTH DAY: JOEL 1:1-2:27. THE SCOURGE—LOCUSTS
AND DROUGHT.

Read chs. 1 and 2 and fill out the following:

Part I. 1:2-2:27.

1. 1:2-14.

2-4.

5-7.

8-12.

13-14.

2. 15-20.

3. 2:1-11.

12-20.

4. 2:21-27.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Your sons shall prophesy,*" v. 28. Paul sums up the teachings of the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of first Corinthians in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter, when he says, "Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but," he goes on, "*rather that ye may prophesy.*" To prophesy, both in Old Testament times and in New Testament times, as well as now, was and is what God wants, and prophesying is witnessing. We are in the world to be witnesses. Acts 1:8.

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

FIRST DAY: JOEL 2:28-32. ACTS 2:17-21. PROMISE
OF THE SPIRIT.

Up to this point we have had the historical occasion looking into the past; we come now to the prophecy itself, looking into the future.

Part II. The Holy Spirit and Deliverance, 2:28-3:21.

As the preceding passages referred to temporal relief, this refers to spiritual.

The promise of the Spirit's outpouring, v. 28, is suggested by the promise of rain.

What were to be the characteristics of the time spoken of here?

What is the promise of vs. 28, 29?

When was it fulfilled?

Cf. The wish of Moses in Numb. 11:29.

Was this promise entirely fulfilled at Pentecost?

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: "*Your young men shall see visions.*" What a miserable place this world would be if there were no visions. If Moody had not seen visions of recitation halls and dormitories on the hillsides of Northfield and Mount Hermon; if Mott had not seen visions of the students of the world united in Christian effort; if Edison and Marconi and Morse and all the rest of them had not had their visions! May our young men see visions!

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

SECOND DAY: JOEL 3:1-8. ENEMIES WILL BE DESTROYED.

The promise made in these verses is suggested by the promised destruction of the locusts. What is the promise?

What nations are referred to in these verses?

What was their sin?

Write out a summary of chs. 1 and 2.

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

THIRD DAY: JOEL 3:9-13. THE ASSEMBLY.

A call to the nations to assemble: God is ready to judge.

Jehoshaphat, v. 12. Jehovah judges.

What does the prophet mean by v. 13?

Contrast v. 10 with Micah 4:3, and state why these sayings are so different.

Notice the repetition of the word *come* in vs. 9, 11, 12, 13.

Write out the substance of this section.

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

FOURTH DAY : JOEL 3:14-17. THE JUDGMENT.

We have again the closing promise so frequent in the Minor Prophets.

Cf. the words of Jesus in Matt. 24 and 25.

“ There are two classes in the world: those who call on God, those who do not. There is a day of judgment when one shall receive blessings, the other destruction.” What you are doing *now* determines which class you will be in hereafter.

Summary:

Locusts: Locusts destroyed; enemies destroyed.

Drought: rain; outpouring of Spirit.

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

FIFTH DAY: JOEL 3:18-21. THE GLORIOUS FUTURE.

We have here again at the close of the prophecy the promise of restoration.

What is the promise here?

What do these verses show concerning God's power and authority over other nations than the chosen people?

How many times these messengers of God, after denouncing judgment upon a sinful people, in terms so severe that there seems to be no way of escape, turn at last to assure their hearers that God is a God of mercy, that "He will not always chide, neither will He keep His anger forever."

Fill out the following outline:

Part II. 2:28-3:21.

1.

2.

3.

Conclusion, 3:18-21.

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

SIXTH DAY: JOEL 3:18. THE MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

What is the prophecy of this verse?

Cf. Ezek. 47:1-12.

The teaching of the book concerning prayer. Read 1:14, 19; 2:12, 13, 15-17, 32; and tell what Joel teaches on this great subject.

MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY: The Spirit comes to qualify men for bearing witness, 3:28 (cf. Acts 1:8). When the apostles testified with such power that multitudes were won for Christ, Peter said the prophecy of Joel was being fulfilled. Are you living such a life that it may be fulfilled in you? Are you seeking the Spirit for some other purpose?

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK. THE HOLY
SPIRIT AND DELIVERANCE.

SEVENTH DAY: JOEL CHS. 1, 2, 3. THE DAY OF
JEHOVAH.

Read the book through and see how it tells about the day of Jehovah.

The Message of Joel: "Our message to the age must always be that of the Divine supremacy, of the Divine immanence, of the Divine activity. We want to tell them that the Lord that sitteth in the heavens laughs at the folly of their rebellion, and weeps over the misery of their sin, and waits as King to pardon repenting souls. Whenever men and nations return to the Lord, His mercy receives them and provides escape from judgment. That seems to me to be the great and marvelous message of Joel to this age—the God of government and the God of grace."

Key thought: God in judgment and mercy.

Key word: Judgment.

Key text: 2:13.

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TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST.

FIRST DAY: JONAH 1:1-6. THE MISSION DISOBEYED.

The book falls naturally into four parts, corresponding nearly with the division into chapters.

What do we know about the authorship of the book?

Note that Jonah is always spoken of in the third person, never in the first. The book does not claim to have been written by Jonah. It has been called "The Prophetic Story of Jonah."

What do we know about Jonah? 1:1, 9.; 2 Kings 14:25.

What is the subject of ch. 1?

Where was Nineveh?

What are we told about it? Cf. Nahum 2:1-7.

Where was Tarshish?

What was the command to Jonah?

What does "*cry against it*," v. 2, mean?

Where was Joppa?

What did Jonah do in answer to God's command?

Why did he fly? 4:2.

What happened when Jonah disobeyed?

Memorize v. 6.

TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO
THE UTTERMOST.

SECOND DAY: JONAH 1:7-17. THE MISSIONARY IN
TROUBLE.

What method did the sailors use to detect Jonah? Cf.
Acts 1:26.

What was Jonah doing? Cf. Jesus asleep in the ship.
“Where guilt is there is peril; where Christ is there is
safety.”

This has been called Jonah’s punishment; another has
said it is rather his conversion.

What can you say, from the prayer in v. 14 and from
v. 16, had been the effect on the sailors?

Note: *The sailors turn to God and are saved.*

Contrast the tender care of these heathen sailors for
Jonah, God’s prophet, with Israel’s treatment of the
prophets and Jonah’s treatment of God.

The fish swallows Jonah: “Man can build a submarine
boat to carry a hundred passengers, but they deny the
great God the power to prepare a fish to carry one.”—
Morgan.

“And this is the tragedy of the book of Jonah, that a
book which is made the means of one of the most sublime
revelations of truth in the Old Testament should be known
to most only for its connection with a whale.”

192 The Message of the Twelve Prophets

TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST.

THIRD DAY: JONAH 2:1-10. A PRAYER.

What is the subject of ch. 2?

What thought is in Jonah's mind as he sings this prayer-song?

What Psalms does he refer to? Use the marginal references.

What does he pray for?

Read Ps. 130.

Note: *Jonah turns to God and is saved.*

PRAYER: "O Thou forgiving God, how often like Thy servant in the olden days we have been disobedient to Thy command. In great mercy bear with us in our stubbornness, forgive our wilfulness and speak to us again, so that we may obey. As Thou didst listen to the crying of thy disobedient servant as he turned to Thee, so listen to us to-day, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO
THE UTMOST.

FOURTH DAY: JONAH 3:1-10. ANOTHER CHANCE.

What is the subject of ch. 3?

“Having learned thro’ suffering his moral kinship with the heathen, and having offered his life for some of them, Jonah receives a second commission to go to Nineveh.”

His second commission, vs. 1, 2.

How does this call differ from the first?

Note his simple obedience.

What does he mean by “*Of three days’ journey*”?
V. 3.

What did he preach?

What was the result of his preaching?

Upon the people? V. 5.

Upon the king? V. 6.

What was done?

What were the people urged to do? V. 8.

Note: *The Ninevites turn to God and are saved*,
v. 10, cf. Nahum 2:13.

“The purpose of the parable (of Jonah), and it is patent from first to last, is to illustrate the mission of prophecy to the Gentiles, God’s care of them, and their susceptibility to His word.”

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TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST.

FIFTH DAY: JONAH 4:1-11. A DISGRUNTLED MISSIONARY.

What is the subject of ch. 4?

Why was Jonah displeased?

Does Deut. 18:21, 22 throw any light on the reason?

Note God's question, v. 4, and that Jonah instead of answering just sulks.

Why did he go out and watch the city? V. 5.

How does God rebuke him?

What is the meaning of vs. 10, 11?

What kind of people are referred to in v. 11?

Make an outline of the book based on the studies for the week.

Key thought: True repentance brings salvation.

Key word: Repent.

Key text: 3:10; see also Jer. 18:7, 8.

"In this book the prophecy of Israel quits the scene of battle as victor, and as victor in its severest struggle—that against self."

TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO
THE UTTERMOST.

SIXTH DAY: JONAH 1-4.

One purpose of the book of Jonah was "to teach in opposition to the narrow, exclusive view which was too apt to be popular with the Jews, that God's purposes of grace are not limited to Israel alone, but that they are open to the heathen as well, if only they abandon their sinful courses and turn to Him in true penitence."

"The truth which we find in the book of Jonah is as full and fresh a revelation of God's will as prophecy anywhere achieves. That God has granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life is nowhere else in the Old Testament so vividly illustrated."

Make a study of the book as a call to foreign mission service:

1. God is conscious of the heathen's need.
2. The command to go to the heathen.
3. Disobedience and unrest.
4. Obedience.
5. Hard work and discouragement on the field.

"I have read the book of Jonah at least a hundred times, and I will publicly avow, for I am not ashamed of my weakness, that I cannot even now take up this marvellous book, nay, not even speak of it, without the tears rising to my eyes, and my heart beating higher. This apparently trivial book is one of the deepest and grandest that was ever written, and I should like to say to every one who approaches it, 'Take off thy shoes, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.'"—Cornill.

TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK. SALVATION TO
THE UTTERMOST.

SEVENTH DAY: Ps. 95.

How shall we interpret the book of Jonah?

"The sea represents death and judgment. Jonah went into it willingly, unresistingly, yet not of his own act. The hands of Gentiles cast him forth. In due time Jesus laid down His own life, yet not by His own act. The hands of Gentiles nailed Him to the cross. Jonah went down out of sight into the abyss, and the sea was calm; the element that had threatened to destroy the seamen bore them safely up and onward. So Jesus went down, not into sorrow merely, but into judgment; fell under the power of death, and was confined within the bars of the grave; and lo, the sea is calm to us, there is deliverance from going down into the pit, for God has found a ransom; and in righteousness which reproved and threatened us, now forms our protection and support."

"But in the book of Jonah . . . we see a great recovery and expansion of the best elements of prophecy. God's character and Israel's true mission to the world are revealed in the spirit of Hosea and the sea of the Exile, with much of the tenderness, the insight, the analysis of character and even the humor of classic prophecy. These qualities raise the book of Jonah, tho' it is probably the last of our twelve, to the highest rank among them. No book is more worthy to stand by the side of Isaiah XL-LV; none is nearer in spirit to the New Testament."

What the book teaches:

1. That it is wrong for a prophet to attempt to evade God's command. To show a prophet's duty:
 - a. To deliver God's message, whatever it is.
 - b. To be fearless.
 - c. Not to be terrified about the fulfilment.
2. To illustrate Jer. 18:7, 8.
To show that prophecies were conditional.
3. God's treatment of heathen a warning to Israel.
4. God's care of those outside.

TESTIMONY AS TO WHAT THE MESSAGE IS.

"The sacred thought embodied in these varied Scriptures is at once varied and the same. Hosea loves to dwell upon God's yearning love, the love of the husband for the fallen wife, the love of the father for his prodigal son. Amos takes his stand for morals as against religion itself, when the two have irreligiously clashed. Micah presents the true and the false prophecy contending in the struggles of daily life. But other themes grow together into the one prophetic theme of judgment—the Hebrew counterpart of our modern providence. With Nahum it is a judgment upon the foe, as a form of mercy to God's people; Jonah comes as a corrective, with the thought of Jehovah's mercy extending outside His people to the six-score thousand innocents of Nineveh. The mystery of judgment which troubled the wise men of Israel—the impunity of the wicked—appears in Habakkuk magnified to the scale of nations; this prophet's problem is the sight of the Chaldean allowed to prosper and punish wickedness less great than his own. Several of the prophecies are filled with a 'Day of the Lord'; the judgment regularly appears as a visitation first upon Israel, to destroy the evil that is in it; then there is a purification and restoration, and finally a judgment between Israel and the nations; there is at the last an inauguration of a heaven, but it is a heaven upon earth."

What message has come to you from these studies?

"Who is wise and he shall understand these things?
Prudent and he shall know them?
For the ways of the Lord are right,
And the just shall walk in them:
But transgressors shall fall therein!"

—Hos. 14 :9.

Date	Book	Against which Kingdom?	Key Thought	Key Word	Key Text	Outline
	Amos...					
	Hosea...					
	Micah...					
	Zephaniah...					
	Nahum...					
	Habakkuk...					
	Obadiah					
	Haggai...					
	Zechariah...					
	Malachi					
	Joel.....					
	Jonah...					

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